100

One Hundred Greatest

PRESTON NORTH END FC

Post-War Matches

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BY DEAN HAYES

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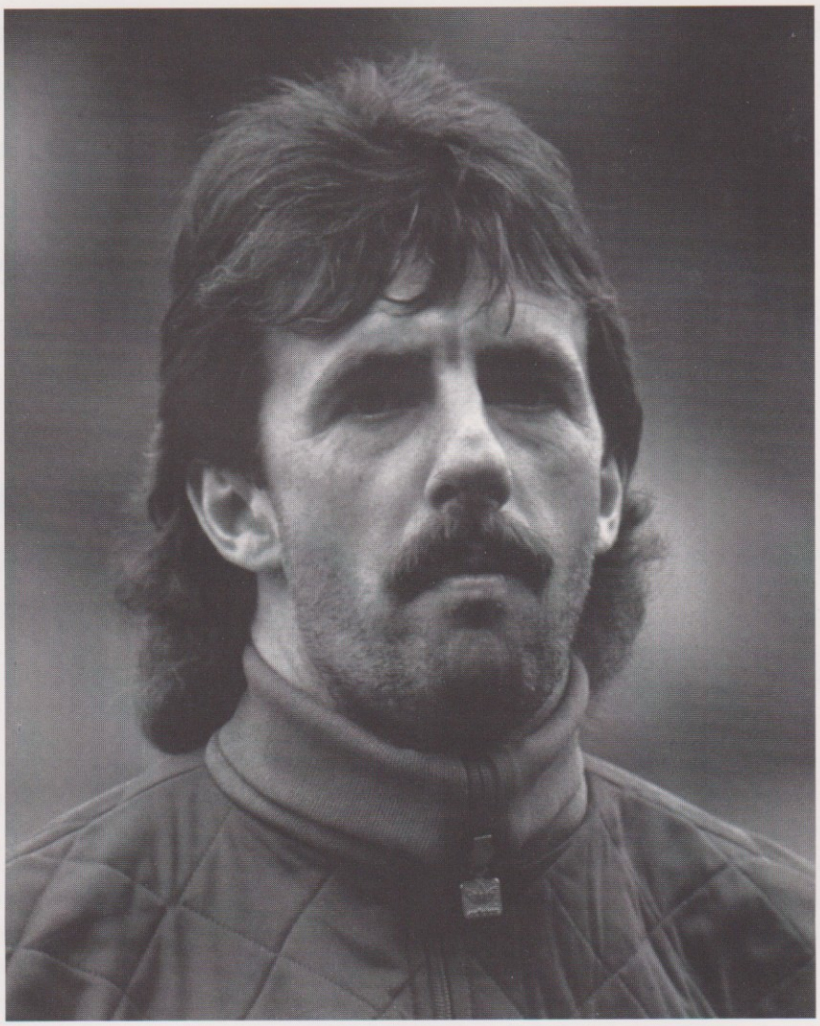
Introduction

When I was asked to write this book, the most difficult task was deciding which games to leave out. North End have been involved in approaching 3,000 games since the war, and choosing 100 was not easy. I am sure many an argument could be had about games that I have omitted. I have also included games which ended in defeat, but marked significant chapters in North End's history. These games qualify, simply because of their significance, culminating in their Play-Off Final at Cardiff.

I hope the games bring back enjoyable memories. It has certainly been a pleasure going through the record books to select the matches, and I am sure it will not be long before the current team are involved in games that merit inclusion in any future volumes - like PNE 6 Stockport 0 for example. **Dean Hayes**

Dean Hayes is a prolific author on Football and Cricket
and previously wrote The Deepdale Story, An A-Z of Preston North End



Foreword

by Mark Lawrenson

There are some great games in this book, but my earliest memories are from the night we beat Rotherham 3-0 at Deepdale to get promoted from the old Third Division to the Second. It was under the management of Alan Ball Senior and I remember the team included the likes of Alan Kelly and Ricky Heppolette.

I remember that we had beaten Fulham on the Saturday and they expected to win the Championship, so much so that they had the trophy there ready, but we beat them. It was packed for the Championship decider at Deepdale. You could feel the tension, and what a relief when we scored the first goal on a night when Alan Spavin ran the game. We had looked like we were going to be promoted for some time, but we never thought we would win the Championship.

Another game that I can remember vividly was the FA Cup defeat at Scarborough. Nowadays, the game would not have gone ahead. It was snowing heavily and the pitch was freezing up, but on the day they beat us fair and square. I played on the left hand side of midfield, and to this day I don't know why! Scarborough had Colin Appleton as manager and he was renowned for upsets and this was certainly one of them. I've never known a team bus so quiet on the way home.

The game I remember most in recent years was the FA Cup third round tie against Arsenal. I was commentating for the BBC and it was very hard to remain unbiased. Although we lost, we were, as I am sure everyone remembers, 2-1 up at half-time. If Luis Boa Morte hadn't scored that goal just before the break I think we would have caused an upset.

That game was a landmark, because it showed how far we had come, but also how far we had to go. We were the best team in the first half, but their class told in the second.

The last game in the book is of course the Play-Off Final and this game did show that we had progressed so much since that Arsenal game. Despite the disappointment, when you look back, you can see that we are going in the right direction and it was amazing just to get to the final. Even now, members of my family and supporters alike tell me what a great day it was.

Let's hope for a 100 more like it, some of them in the Premiership!

Mark Lawrenson

Preston North End v Leeds United

Saturday 31st August 1946

The Finney era begins

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Leeds United 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (McIntosh, Finney, Dougal) **Leeds United:** (Grainger 2)
Attendance	25,311
Referee	S. Boardman (Hale)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Fairbrother; A. Beattie; Scott; Horton; Shankly; Watson; Finney; McIntosh; Dougal; R. Beattie; Wharton; **Leeds United:** Hodgson; Goldberg; Milburn; Price; Holley; Batey; Cochrane; Powell; Henry; Short; Grainger;

A memorable game for North End fans for a number of reasons. It was the first league game at Deepdale since the ill-starred 1939-40 season and a young Preston player who was to shape the future of football in the town, made his long-awaited debut following his demobilisation from the army - Tom Finney. He wasn't the only player to make his debut that day, for seven of the side made their first appearances in the famous white shirt.

One of those making his first start was former St Johnstone forward Willie McIntosh and it was he who brought the crowd to life in the early stages. After the visitors had forced a corner, North End mounted a counter-attack which resulted in the game's opening goal. An accurate pass by Ken Horton found Finney unmarked. Finney then played a superb ball inside for McINTOSH, who took the ball in his stride before shooting across Hodgson in the Leeds goal.

North End then began to dominate the game and in the 18th minute they extended their lead when FINNEY scored with a brilliant solo effort. After beating Milburn, the North End winger curled a beautiful shot just inside the far post. The crowd went wild as though they had never seen a goal before and an era was born!

With Milburn firmly on the back foot, Finney continued to run at him and with his confidence growing, it wasn't long before the Leeds defender received a strong talking to from the referee after upending the Preston player just outside the area. Ken Horton wasted the resulting free-kick after which the visitors adopted a more direct approach. After 25 minutes, Leeds were back in the game when Cochrane found GRAINGER and he was allowed a free run on goal before shooting past Jack Fairbrother. Finney was largely playing a lone hand with his precision moves in as much as his colleagues were not responding to his prompting.

The second-half was much scrappier with Finney's weaving again the highlight. Bobby Beattie had forced Hodgson into three fine saves and had the ball in the net only to be adjudged offside before Horton missed his third good chance of the afternoon. He pressure finally told when Jimmy DOUGAL netted from close range again following good work by Finney.

As the half wore on, the visitors came back into the game more and more and Fairbrother saved from Henry and Short before Scott cleared Cochrane's goalbound effort off the line. With time running out, Colin GRAINGER netted his and Leeds United's second goal after Fairbrother in the North End goal had made a mistake.

Portsmouth v Preston North End

Saturday 14th December 1946

Pompey lead three times but North End get well-earned point

Final Score	**Portsmouth 4 Preston North End 4**
Venue	Fratton Park
Scorers	**Portsmouth:** (Reid, Froggatt, Barlow 2) **PNE:** (Garth, McIntosh, R. Beattie, Wharton)
Attendance	24,702
Referee	A. T. Ford (Liverpool)
Line-ups	**Portsmouth:** Butler; Rookes; Ferrier; Wharton; Flewin; Dickinson; Barlow; Reid; Evans; McAlinden; Froggatt; **PNE:** Fairbrother; A. Beattie; Scott; Horton; Williams; Hamilton; Finney; Garth; McIntosh; R. Beattie; Wharton;

North End have provided some famous games at Fratton Park but few of their previous visits have produced such a struggle as in this memorable match when they and Portsmouth shared eight goals.

Fog drifting over the ground soon cleared as Portsmouth attacked right from the kick-off and Froggatt headed over from point-blank range. Immediately after this, Portsmouth forced two corners and from the second of these, just three minutes after the start, they took the lead. Froggatt's flag-kick dropped at the feet of the unmarked BARLOW who slammed it into the net past Fairbrother.

Portsmouth's lead was short-lived when on nine minutes, North End were awarded a free-kick. Horton lobbed the ball into the Portsmouth goalmouth and GARTH nodded it past Butler's half-hearted attempt to save.

Before the game was a quarter-of-an-hour old, North End had taken the lead. McIntosh eluded Flewin and crossed to the near post. Butler appeared to have it covered but it slipped from his grasp and WHARTON crashed the ball into the back of the net from just a few yards out. Finney made a brilliant run through the Portsmouth defence but then there was no-one to finish off the winger's excellent work.

Portsmouth came back strongly as the half wore on and their persistency was rewarded a minute before the interval when FROGGATT netted with a hard drive which gave Fairbrother little opportunity of saving it.

Reid should have restored Pompey's lead within two minutes of the resumption but from just a yard out, he somehow managed to balloon the ball over the bar. Shortly afterwards, two goals came within the space of three minutes. The first of these put Pompey in front again when BARLOW shot into the net following a corner-kick. McINTOSH made the scores level once more, when he headed Preston's third goal from a free-kick taken by Finney a few yards from the right-hand edge of the penalty area. Ten minutes from time, Portsmouth broke away and REID fastening on to Barlow's through ball shot past the advancing Fairbrother. Within two minutes of this, Portsmouth looked like extending their lead but Fairbrother saved at the feet of the on-rushing McAlinden. With only seven minutes to go, the scores were again levelled. Finney took the ball to the by-line before pulling it back for Bobby BEATTIE to side-foot into the net. In the 88th minute a slip by Scott let Reid through. His terrific shot was parried by Fairbrother but he was unable to hold the ball and with Portsmouth players claiming it h crossed the line, he managed to scramble it away to safety.

A share of the spoils was the right result.

Preston North End v Derby County

Saturday 6th December 1947

Amazing comeback as Whites won't lie down

Final Score	**Preston North End 7 Derby County 4**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Shankly 2, 1 pen, McLaren 2, McIntosh 2, R. Beattie)
	Derby County: (Howe pen, Morrison 3)
Attendance	28,924
Referee	H. Hartley (Runcorn)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Gooch; Gray; Robertson; Shankly; Williams; Horton; Finney; R. Beattie; McIntosh; McLaren; Anders;
	Derby County: Townsend; Mozley; Howe; Ward; Leuty; Musson; Harrison; Carter; Morrison; Steel; Oliver;

When Derby County arrived at Deepdale, they were on a ten-match unbeaten run and must have thought they could extend that run against a North End side who had just lost three in a row.

As early as the first minute, Gooch only just saved a header from Williams in the game's first attack and then Angus Morrison - the season before joining North End - headed the rebound over the bar.

The game then exploded to life with three goals in six minutes. County's Carter took a throw-in level with North End's penalty area, the ball bouncing up and hitting Williams on the arm, whilst the centre-half was battling with Morrison. The referee adjudged the handball to be deliberate and HOWE stepped up to crash the spot-kick low into the bottom right-hand corner. North End went further behind when MORRISON barged his way past Shankly and Williams before hitting a drive into the net off the inside of the post.

North End needed to pull a goal back quickly and they did. McLaren fed Anders and the winger made a surging run towards the box. He was just about to pull the trigger when he was hauled down by Mozley. After consulting with his linesman, the referee awarded a penalty which Bill SHANKLY slotted home with aplomb. The game was fast and flowing and mistakes at both ends were inevitable, as it was a game of all out attack. Gooch was twice forced to save brilliantly from Steel and McIntosh almost latched onto a McLaren through ball in front of the Kop.

North End were level just before the half-hour mark. Finney saw a shot blocked by Howe and from the resulting corner, McLAREN jumped highest to head home from close range. On 32 minutes, Derby regained the lead with a wonderful individual goal from Angus Morrison. The big Scotsman picked up the ball and dashed past Williams, as Gooch came off his line, MORRISON slipped the ball past him and into the empty net. Just before the break, North End drew level. McLaren was brought down outside the area and Horton played a through all to Shankly. SHANKLY challenged Townsend the Derby 'keeper as he came out to try and collect the ball, saw it slip from his grasp and spin over his shoulder into the net.

The pace had certainly not slackened when the two teams returned to continue the ding-dong battle. Anders was tackled as he approached a shooting position and then Gooch flung himself on a deflected effort from Harrison. Beattie missed by inches and Carter saw a header from a Morrison cross saved as the game went from end to end.

Derby took the lead again with an hour gone. It was Angus MORRISON who completed his hat-trick, the burly striker heading home Robertson's cross. Within two minutes it was 4-4 as Finney cut inside Howe before slipping the ball to BEATTIE. The Scotsman took his

time before driving the ball past Townsend's despairing dive. In the 75th minute, North End took the lead for the first time as Anders darted on to an under-hit pass from Leuty and played a all through to McINTOSH who gleefully smashed the ball into the net. With seven minutes left, Shankly drove the ball into the goalmouth and McINTOSH applied the finishing touch and then three minutes from time, the effervescent Finney created an easy chance for McLAREN to get his second and North End's seventh of a wonderful afternoon at Deepdale.

What the papers said:

'Viator' in the Lancashire Evening Post wrote 'What spurred North End into action I cannot say - there could have been half a dozen psychological factors, one of them not unconnected with a resolve all round to justify faith in continued confidence - but Derby must have wondered whence the opposition suddenly derived a match-winning spirit which galvanised the whole team into a tremendously determined force grimly set upon victory no matter how many rebuffs were suffered.'

Describing the game itself, he wrote 'North End will never give a finer exhibition of determination linked with skill in fighting back after being behind four times. To be two goals down in six minutes would shake any team but North End drew level and twice again equalised after further rebuffs. Finally in a glorious finish, their eager sprightly attack anxious to atone for many recent shortcomings in the all-important matter of finishing, netted three late goals to gain a splendid triumph.'

North End's goal heroes pose for the cameras.

Manchester United v Preston North End

Saturday 28th February 1948

Reds survive crash to reach FA Cup semi-final

Final Score	**Manchester United 4 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Maine Road
Scorers	**Manchester United:** (Mitten, Pearson, Morris, Rowley)
	PNE: (McIntosh)
Attendance	74,243
Referee	T. Smith (Atherstone)
Line-ups	**Manchester United:** Crompton; Carey; Aston; Anderson; Chilton; Cockburn; Delaney; Morris; Rowley; Pearson; Mitten;
	PNE: Hindle; Gray; Scott; Shankly; Waters; Horton; Finney; R. Beattie; McIntosh; McLaren; Anders;

North End travelled to Maine Road to face First Division high-fliers Manchester United in an FA Cup sixth round tie, their third game at the ground in three weeks. United could have been slightly traumatised coming into the tie. Their coach was involved in a crash on its way to the ground from Old Trafford, but thankfully there were no injuries and they could name an unchanged line-up. North End weren't as lucky, losing 'keeper Jimmy Gooch through injury, local boy Jack Hindle coming into the side for his debut in front of a near 75,000 crowd!

North End had taken over 20,000 followers to Manchester and they gave the team a rousing welcome as they took to the pitch.

The Reds could have taken the lead inside the first minute after Pearson put Rowley clear but the centre-forward's shot grazed the crossbar.

North End's defence had an unsettling first few minutes but at the other end, McIntosh and McLaren were causing United's defenders a few problems. However, it was United who were doing nearly all of the attacking and it was no surprise when they took the lead after 24 minutes. Delaney began the build-up, feeding Morris out wide. He then delivered a centre into the North End goalmouth. Hindle looked favourite for it but it deflected off Gray and into the path of MITTEN a few yards from goal and he made no mistake. Eight minutes later, United added a deserved second. Mitten, who was out wide, whipped over an inviting cross. Hindle and Waters couldn't seem to decide who should go for it and in that split second, PEARSON nipped in between them and crashed the ball home and with only one team in it, it looked highly unlikely that North End would get back in the game.

Eventually, the Whites did pull a goal back when Finney went past Chilton before putting McINTOSH clear. The North End centre-forward beat Aston with some good close control before firing a shot past Crompton.

In the early minutes after the break, it looked like the late goal for North End had given them a fillip and they attacked with much more vigour. Anders brought a fine diving save out of Crompton, before McIntosh just failed to beat the United 'keeper, after he had been unable to hold Finney's shot. After Chilton had upended

McIntosh in the box, North End's players claimed for a penalty but the referee waved play on.

United gradually got back into the game and scored twice within the space of five minutes. The Whites' defence had done a good job in the second-half, keeping Rowley and his colleagues quiet but on 76 minutes, MORRIS latched on to a Delaney cross that Gray and Hindle had missed, to slot home from a few yards out. Five minutes later, Hindle could only parry Morris's shot and ROWLEY pounced for United's fourth.

On the second-half's play, North End deserved more from the game. The accomplished United side were one of the best, if not the best team in the country and to cause them so many problems was in itself an achievement.

What the papers said:

Writing in the Football extra of the Lancashire Post and Chronicle, 'Viator' wrote about the support travelling to watch North End. 'Just after noon there was a sudden rush on the Preston Station booking office. The crowd began to stream down to the railway station, decorated with blue and white favours and armed with rattles and any kind of noise-producing instrument. There were lordly gentlemen armed with travelling rugs, women wearing 'New Look' and Wellington boots! - teenagers, enthusiasts who scorned overcoats and even supporters in invalid chairs, including one man without legs.'

North End's line up from the late 1940s.

Preston North End v Blackpool

Saturday 1st May 1948

Former hero humiliates North End

Final Score	**Preston North End 0 Blackpool 7**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (-)
	Blackpool: (McIntosh 5, Rickett, Munro)
Attendance	26,610
Referee	W. B. Nixon (Manchester)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Hall; Walton; Scott; Horton; Waters; Dougall; Finney; McLaren; Jackson; Hannah; McClure;
	Blackpool: Robinson; Shimwell; Crosland; Buchan; Hayward; Kelly; Hobson; Munro; McIntosh; McCall; Rickett;

Though this might not be a game North End fans would care to remember, it had a number of features making it worthy of inclusion in the 100 greatest games. It set an unfortunate tone for the season that was to follow when North End were relegated from the First Division and it also saw the Seasiders without their best players, show up their local rivals!

Blackpool arrived at Deepdale missing four of their most famous players, including Stanley Matthews and Stan Mortensen, whilst North End were without 'keeper Jimmy Gooch who had been injured a month previous.

In the opening minutes, Finney mesmerised Kelly and Crosland, setting up McLaren who could only find the side-netting. McLaren again went close in the early exchanges but Kelly managed to block a goal-bound effort. Finney then forced Robinson into two smart saves in front of the Kop, the second involving some good build-up play from Dougall. However, midway through the first-half, Blackpool were gifted the lead by the unfortunate Hall in the North End goal. A cross was put over for McINTOSH and he headed towards goal but with little power, however the 'keeper failed to grasp the ball with no challenging forward and it dropped into the net. The Seasiders ought to have extended their lead within five minutes of the opener but Rickett missed an open goal from 10 yards out after McIntosh had played him in between Scott's legs. Just before the interval there was a contentious moment when North End thought they had equalised. There was a scramble in the area and with Robinson off his line, McLaren had lobbed the ball goalwards, Shimwell stood in the goalmouth, jumped up to head it away but the North End players thought it was in and by some way, adjudging by the signalling from Jackson but the appeals were in vain.

The decision must have played on the North End players' minds because the second-half started with the Blackpool players putting their Lancashire rivals on the back foot. After both McClure and Rickett had spurned good opportunities, McINTOSH caught the North End defence asleep, accepting a through ball from Munro and keeping his head to slot past Hall.

Finney swapped wings to try and turn things around but he could do nothing as Walton and Waters looked increasingly uncomfortable against a confident Blackpool attack. Hall's day went from bad to worse eleven minutes into the second-half when the stand-in 'keeper gifted the Seasiders another goal. This time it was RICKETT who was the player to gain from the error as he hit a low shot from 30 yards. The shot wasn't particularly powerful but Hall, to both

Rickett and the crowd's astonishment, let the ball go through his hands by the left-hand postto make it 3-0.

McINTOSH quickly added a fourth, his third of the game before McClure and McLaren missed good opportunities for North End. The heads had now dropped and the fans were leaving in their numbers but those who stayed saw more clinical finishing from the Seasiders. MUNRO got the fifth from long distance and this was followed by two more in the last ten minutes from McINTOSH, one of which was probably down to the luckless Hall. This was North End's worst defeat for 20 years and unfortunately for them and the crowd, it came against their local rivals !

What the papers said:

'Viator' certainly said what he thought in the following Monday's Lancashire Evening Post. 'The whole affair was pathetic in the extreme and a triumph for the sharp-shooting McIntosh whose goalscoring total curiously enough had stood at 13 for two months before the game.'

Yet again Sir Tom Finney shows his mercurial skills that made him not only North End's greatest ever player, but one of the games greats as well.

Newcastle United v Preston North End

Saturday 28th August 1948

Magpies outplayed in North End away romp

Final Score	**Newcastle United 2 Preston North End 5**
Venue	St James Park
Scorers	**Newcastle United:** (Donaldson, Stobbart)
	PNE: (Finney, McLaren 2, Mcintosh 2)
Attendance	63,549
Referee	J. S. Pickles (Bradford)
Line-ups	**Newcastle United:** Fairbrother; Cowell; Craig; Harvey; Fraser; Dodgin; Sibley; Gibson; Donaldson; Stobbart; McCall;
	PNE: Newlands; Walton; Scott; Horton; Corbett; Davie; Finney; McLaren; McIntosh; Beattie; Langton;

Following their promotion from the Second Division, Newcastle continued to be a big attraction and a crowd of 63,549 crammed into St James Park for the visit of Preston North End.

Tom Finney began the visitors first real effort, beating two men and shaking off McCall's challenge before squaring the ball to McIntosh. His shot was blocked and though McLaren gained possession, he failed to make the most of the opening. Langton's back pass to Davie was pushed into the inside-forward's position where Langton and Beattie got in each others way after the winger had come inside for a return ball.

Newcastle's first attack brought a goal. Just seven minutes had gone when Gibson put DONALDSON through, he evaded Corbett's challenge and shot past the advancing Newlands. Three minutes later, Beattie should have levelled the scores but he shot well wide from close in with only Fairbrother to beat. Beattie then created a goalscoring opportunity for McLaren but his fellow Scot blasted the ball wide. North End drew level on 13 minutes when McINTOSH met Beattie's accurate cross to head firmly past the Newcastle 'keeper.

At the other end, first Corbett and then Walton made goal-line clearances with Newlands beaten before North End thought they had taken the lead. Fairbrother dropped the ball at McLaren's feet and he tapped it forward to McIntosh who was in an offside position when he put the ball in the net.

There then followed a sustained spell of pressure from North End and it came as no surprise when they went 2-1 up after 32 minutes. McLAREN met Finney's corner at the near post and glanced a header past the static Fairbrother. North End continued to do all the attacking and in one raid, the Newcastle 'keeper was knocked out following a challenge by McLaren. With just three minutes of the first-half remaining, North End extended their lead. Davie, Beattie and McIntosh were involved in the build-up but it was McLAREN who got the final touch, beating Fairbrother from close range.

McLaren almost completed his hat-trick in the opening minute of the second-half, his shot grazing the outside of the post. For Newcastle, Donaldson sent a header just over the bar and Gibson brought a fine save out of Newlands. In the 55th minute, North End scored their fourth goal when Fairbrother could only beat out McLaren's shot to McINTOSH who promptly slammed it back past the prostrate Newcastle 'keeper.

The Magpies reduced the arrears against the run of play midway through the second-half when STOBBART found himself clear from a cross-field pass from Joe Harvey and ran on to shoot past Newlands. North End made great efforts to restore their three-goal lead with McIntosh shooting into the side netting and Gibson heading Beattie's shot off the line. After McIntosh had missed another golden opportunity, FINNEY netted North End's fifth goal, converting McIntosh's cross after good work by Langton.

Preston North End v Sunderland

Saturday 19th March 1949

Shankly's last game

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Sunderland 3**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Langton)
	Sunderland: (Davis 3)
Attendance	34,195
Referee	H. Jackson (Leeds)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Gooch; Brown; Walton; Shankly; Waters; Robertson; Finney; Beattie; Morrison; Knight; Langton;
	Sunderland: Mapson; Stelling; Hudgell; Scotson; Hall; A. Wright; T. Wright; Broadis; Davis; Shackleton; Watson;

At first glance the scoreline may not give a good reason for the game's inclusion in this book but it should be for various reasons.

This was the last game of a player who is now immortalised at North End with his face in the seats of the Kop - Bill Shankly who moved to Carlisle in acrimonious circumstances. It was also another step in North End's first post-war relegation season out of the top flight of English football. Shankly left, feeling let down by the club who would not allow him to take a player/manager's role and his loss at the back was felt in the vital last few games of the campaign.

As for the game itself, Sunderland dropped their recent signing, Turnbull, as they looked to improve on recent results which had seen them slip into the danger area near the bottom of the table. Finney, who missed large chunks of the season because of injury was fit to start.

The opening exchanges were lively and both Morrison for North End and Shackleton for the Wearsiders went close to opening the scoring. After 11 minutes, North End's goal had a lucky escape when Waters misjudged a header and Tommy Wright was able to hit a first time shot which Jimmy Gooch had to dive full length to tip over the crossbar. This was merely the prelude to a thoroughly deserved goal by Sunderland. Arthur Wright on the right-wing slipped the ball into the middle for DAVIS, he smartly nipped round Waters before beating Gooch from close range. The Wearsiders went close to extending their lead but Gooch was equal to long range efforts from Broadis and Shackleton. Two minutes into first-half injury time, Langton was upended in the area by Scotson. The linesman on the East Paddock raised his flag for a penalty and with the referee in full agreement, LANGTON stepped up and drove the spot-kick firmly past Mapson to level it up at the interval.

With only ten minutes left, the vulnerability that had been so prevalent during the season, reared its ugly head again as Sunderland took the lead. Shackleton created an opening for Tommy Wright to square the ball for DAVIS to net his second. The North End players' heads dropped after battling so hard and in the final minute, DAVIS completed his hat-trick, slipping past Waters and slotting the ball past the advancing Gooch - relegation for the Whites wasn't far away!

What the papers said:

'Viator' once again had his finger on the pulse when he said 'This was a bitter blow which could mean Second Division football at Deepdale next season. While little had gone right for the home attack, they had been off key against relentless opposition and contributed to their own undoing by playing in much too cramped style.'

Wolverhampton Wanderers v Preston North End

Saturday 2nd May 1949

Whites almost sure to suffer drop with Finney out

Final Score	**Wolverhampton Wanderers 2 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Molineux
Scorers	**Wolverhampton Wanderers:** (Mullen, Hancocks) **PNE:** (Langton pen)
Attendance	54,425
Referee	C. J. Barrick (Northampton)
Line-ups	**Wolverhampton Wanderers:** Williams; Pritchard; Springthorpe; Crook; Shorthouse; Wright; Hancocks; Smyth; Pye; Wilshaw; Mullen; **PNE:** Gooch; W. Brown; Walton; Robertson; Waters; Dougall; Anders; Beattie; E. Brown; Knight; Langton;

Preston North End had salt rubbed into their wounds at Molineux as Wolves paraded the FA Cup in front of 54,425 vociferous supporters. It was a galling experience for the struggling Lancashire side to see Wolverhampton celebrate and be unable at the same time to do anything to lessen their own prospect of dropping ignominiously into the Second Division. Like so many other struggling teams they saw everything go against them and Wolves, playing at half-speed were able almost literally to walk through the defence!

Playing with the confidence bred of success, the FA Cup winners' almost took the lead in their first attack of the game as Gooch failed to hold Hancocks' powerfully-struck long range shot, the ball being cleared by Walton. Smyth then sent a crashing right-foot drive against the post and Mullen shot over when put clear by Jesse Pye.

Wolves opened the scoring in the 17th minute when following a clever Hancocks run and centre, MULLEN hit the ball past the outstretched arms of Jimmy Gooch in the North End goal. Dennis Wilshaw, who had replaced the injured Dunn, almost added a second a minute later but his header was beaten away by Gooch. Pye brought another fine save out of the North End 'keeper and Hancocks who was at the heart of most of the home side's attacks, shot into the side-netting with only Gooch to beat. HANCOCKS soon had the home fans roaring when he added a second goal with a 25 yard free-kick which was so fierce that it screwed out of Gooch's hands into the net.

North End's only chance of a one-sided first-half came in the 42nd minute when Langton just five yards out, saw Bert Williams produce the game's best save.

Following the resumption, Wolves continued to dominate the proceedings and came close to extending their lead on a number of occasions. North End showed themselves to be more of an attacking force but their raids were set up either by Anders or Langton, the only men in the Preston team with any confidence in themselves or each other.

Midway through the second-half, Pye was hurt in a collision with Waters and had to leave the field. He returned shortly afterwards and though in obvious pain, created a goalscoring opportunity for Mullen who shot inches wide. Smyth and Hancocks linked up well and the latter who could have had a hat-trick, forced Gooch to save at the foot of the post.

North End's attacking endeavours in the second-half were rewarded three minutes from time when LANGTON scored from the spot after Springthorpe had handled a cross from Anders. It was too little, too late.

Blackburn Rovers v Preston North End

Friday 7th April 1950

North End win with weakened team

Final Score	**Blackburn Rovers 2 Preston North End 3**
Venue	Ewood Park
Scorers	**Blackburn Rovers:** (Moore, Graham) **PNE:** (Beattie 2; E. Brown)
Attendance	42,891
Referee	W. Evans (Liverpool)
Line-ups	**Blackburn Rovers:** Patterson; Suart; Eckersley; Horton; Holt; Bell; Crossan; Graham; Moore; Wharton; Edds; **PNE:** Gooch; Walton; Scott; Docherty; Mattinson; Forbes; Finney; Beattie; E. Brown; Quigley; Anders;

This was North End's first season in the Second Division since the 1933-34 campaign when they were promoted along with Grimsby Town. Unfortunately, it was another indifferent season for the Whites as their away form contributed to the lack of a serious challenge on promotion. However, this Good Friday victory over local rivals Blackburn was some consolation!

Preston had the better of the early exchanges, mastering the lively ball better against the wind than their opponents who had the wind at their backs. North End took the lead after 11 minutes when BEATTIE fastened on to Docherty's pass, pivoted and struck a powerful shot out of Patterson's reach. Rovers pressed forward in search of an equaliser but Gooch was equal to anything the home side's attack threw at him. On the half-hour mark, Walton twisted his knee in an innocuous challenge, forcing Quigley to drop back to right-back whilst Walton moved on to the wing.

North End's somewhat wobbly defence had two or three narrow escapes in the minutes leading up to the interval but held out to go in at half-time with a one goal lead.

Tremendous pressure from Rovers after the resumption led to the home side drawing level within a matter of minutes after the restart. An inswinging corner from Edds led to MOORE outjumping Quigley at the far post and directing his header over the outstretched hands of Gooch.

Though Rovers were now on top, two defensive lapses enabled North End to snatch a two-goal lead midway through the second-half. The injured Walton was able to flick an excellent cross by Anders to BROWN who placed his shot wide of Patterson in the Rovers goal. Three minutes later, Brown won a corner off Holt. Finney's high ball was poorly cleared and Forbes headed to the unmarked BEATTIE who took his chance with consummate ease.

Bell was out of luck with a terrific drive which crashed against the crossbar with Gooch well beaten. Then Graham from Crossan's through ball, glanced a shot off the face of the near post with Gooch again a spectator. Ten minutes from time, Rovers scrambled a second goal when GRAHAM's half-hit shot was helped over the line by Quigley, though the North End player later said the ball was already over the line.

In the closing stages of the game, the referee overlooked several penalty appeals. Finney was upended twice in the area whilst Eckersley appeared to handle the ball under the referee's nose. Rovers too had their claims turned down when Quigley brought down Moore as he shaped to shoot.

Preston North End v Blackburn Rovers

Monday 10th April 1950

Easter double for Whites and Beattie

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Blackburn Rovers 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Quigley, Beattie 2) **Blackburn:** (Edds)
Attendance	27,925
Referee	W. Evans (Liverpool)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Mattinson; Robertson; Finney; Beattie; Brown; Quigley; Anders; **Blackburn:** Patterson; Suart; Eckersley; Campbell; Holt; Bell; McCaig; Graham; Moore; Horton; Edds;

Following North End's 3-2 win at Ewood Park on Good Friday, Rovers came to Deepdale hoping for revenge.

It was a shocking day in Preston with gales and storms probably knocking 10,000 off the crowd and costing the club £1,000 in gate receipts. The weather certainly didn't help the pitch which was three-quarters flooded before the game began though the sun did try to break through for the kick-off.

After North End had won the toss, Rovers found themselves playing into a strong head wind in the first-half as they attacked the Town End. Within minutes of the start, heavy rain began to fall again but this didn't deter the Whites who almost took the lead with their first attack of the game. Patterson deflected a shot from Eddie Brown onto the bar but Beattie was slow in reacting to the rebound. Allowing the Rovers' 'keeper to spring back across his line and stop the inside-forward's half-hearted effort. The ball was periodically sticking in the pools of water gathering on the Deepdale pitch and undoubtedly in today's game the match would never have kicked off. This didn't stop Tom Finney though and he twice created openings for Beattie and Quigley. Preston ought to have taken the lead on 17 minutes when Brown found time and space to shoot, but he lost the ball under his feet and Suart was able to recover.

The game despite the conditions was end to end and three minutes before the interval a Willie Cunningham clearance set up a North End counter-attack which led to the opener. The long ball out of defence by Cunningham fell kindly for Eddie Brown who centred for QUIGLEY. The North End inside-forward brought the ball beautifully under control before finishing with aplomb to give the Whites a deserved half-time advantage.

The second-half began in a blinding storm of hail and sleet and with it Blackburn faced a further flurry North End pressure, which brought a second goal within only two minutes of the restart. Quigley dummied his way past three Rovers defenders before slipping the ball across the six-yard box to give BEATTIE a simple tap-in and so score his third goal against Rovers in just four days.

Rovers were then pinned back in their own half with wave after wave of attack coming from the inspired Preston team. Patterson made a number of fine saves from Docherty and Scott in particular but on 54 minutes, North End went 3-0 up. Anders began the move leading to the goal, playing a neat hooked pass to Quigley whose cross glanced off Bell before falling to BEATTIE who promptly drove the ball past Patterson.

Rovers, with the wind at their backs, were able to reduce the arrears. Graham outstripped Cunningham for pace before playing a pin-point cross to the feet of EDDS. He gathered the ball on the run and shot high into the roof of the net past the advancing Gooch. The game was a quiet affair from then on in but the Easter weekend had belonged to North End and Bobby Beattie.

Queens Park Rangers v Preston North End

Monday 25th December 1950

Four goals for Wayman in Christmas Day victory

Final Score	**Queens Park Rangers 1 Preston North End 4**
Venue	Loftus Road
Scorers	**Queens Park Rangers:** (Waugh) **PNE:** (Wayman 4)
Attendance	16,790
Referee	R. J. Leafe (Nottingham)
Line-ups	**Queens Park Rangers:** Gullen; Poppitt; Ingham; Nicholas; Woodward; Farrow; Waugh; Parkinson; Addinall; Hatton; Shepherd; **PNE:** Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Mattinson; Forbes; Finney; Horton; Wayman; Beattie; Morrison;

The Christmas Day crowd at Loftus Road were treated to a fine display of attacking football from North End, whose four goals were all scored by Charlie Wayman.

WAYMAN scored the game's opening goal after a couple of minutes when he somehow headed into the net backwards from Tommy Docherty's lobbed centre. Tom Finney was having an outstanding game, putting in a series of crosses that created goalscoring opportunities for the North End forwards. On the 27th minute North End extended their lead. Horton's through ball found Finney and his pin-point cross found the head of WAYMAN who headed powerfully home past the outstretched hands of Rangers' 'keeper Stan Gullen.

Within a couple of minutes, WAYMAN had netted his and North End's third goal, fastening on to a neatly threaded pass from Beattie and after side-stepping Woodward, he placed the ball wide of Gullen. North End could have been even further ahead by the interval, but both Beattie and Morrison missed easy chances, whilst Rangers' 18-year-old wing-half Brian Nicholas cleared a Wayman effort off the line.

After dominating the early stages of the second-half, North End deservedly extended their lead. A move involving Finney, Horton and Beattie, ended with WAYMAN curling home a 20-yard shot into Gullen's top left-hand corner.

Just on the hour mark, Rangers hit back and WAUGH fired home from the edge of the area, beating Jimmy Gooch's despairing dive.

The last half-hour belonged to the home side as both Addinall and Parkinson went close. North End seemed to be resting on their laurels and Bert Addinall forced Gooch into making a fine save at the foot of the post. The way Queen's Park Rangers were playing in this period, it was just as well for North End that they had built up such a substantial lead. The home side looked to have unearthed a great find in Brian Nicholas, the former England youth international having an outstanding game.

But the hero of the hour was undoubtedly Charlie Wayman, who gave Woodward, Rangers' centre-half the slip with ease time and time again.

The following day Rangers travelled to Deepdale where an Angus Morrison goal gave North End a Christmas double in a season in which they won the Second Division Championship.

Preston North End v Barnsley

Saturday 10th March 1951

Barnsley routed as North End win 14 in a row!

Final Score	**Preston North End 7 Barnsley 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Horton 3, Finney 2, Wayman 2)
	Barnsley: (-)
Attendance	31,187
Referee	C. Fletcher (Northwich)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Horton; Wayman; Beattie; Morrison;
	Barnsley: Hough; Lindsay; Pallister; Blanchflower; Glover; Baxter; Smith; McMorran; McCormack; Taylor; Deakin;

This was a great season for North End, winning the Second Division Championship and promotion back to the top flight at the second attempt. After a slow start, just two wins in their opening eight games, North End found their form and after beating Queen's Park Rangers on Christmas Day, embarked on a run of 14 consecutive league wins.

The most impressive of those wins came with the demolition of Barnsley in front of a Deepdale crowd of more than 31,000. However, the game wasn't as one-sided as the scoreline would suggest and with better finishing, the visitors could still have got something out of the game.The Tykes had the better of the opening exchanges and Gooch in the North End goal had to make three good saves in close succession, the most dangerous from McCormack. However, after 24 minutes, the crowd's increasing anxieties were relieved by Finney. He and Horton who had built up a great partnership on the right-hand side, created the opener. Finney, as if by intuition, moved into the middle as Horton went down the right before delivering a ball in for his partner. FINNEY took the ball in his stride and side-stepped Glover before unleashing a left-foot shot that beat Hough by its pace and accuracy. North End then began to assert their authority with Bobby Beattie becoming an influential figure and Charlie Wayman coming close three times within the space of two minutes - first hitting the right-hand upright, then the crossbar with vicious efforts and finally heading into the side-netting. It was WAYMAN who added a predictable second, as his first time shot again hit the post but this time the ball rolled over the line for a deserved goal. North End could have added more before the break but the goals were saved for the second-half.

Within six minutes of the restart, HORTON headed past Hough at the second attempt, his first effort from a Beattie cross coming back off the bar - the fifth time North End had hit the woodwork. On 56 minutes, FINNEY added his second, leaping high to head home Morrison's centre. With a little over ten minutes to play, HORTON scored two goals in the space of sixty seconds. The first was a run through on to a defence-splitting pass by Beattie and the second, his hat-trick, was from a pass provided by Tom Finney. There was still time left for North End to hit the woodwork yet again and to add another goal as WAYMAN smashed a shot against the post before making it seven in the 87th minute.

This was the biggest win of the season and was the tenth straight league win - the Championship wasn't far away!

Preston North End v Hull City

Saturday 21st April 1951

Championship celebrations begin with narrow win

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Hull City 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Finney) **Hull City:** (-)
Attendance	37,827
Referee	A. Murdock (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Horton; Quigley; Beattie; Morrison; **Hull City:** Robinson; Hassall; Jenson; Tarrant; Franklin; Mellor; Harrison; Ackerman; Gerrie; Carter; Burbanks;

North End celebrated being crowned undisputed champions of the Second Division with a home win over Hull City, their only win in the last five games of the season, having won 14 in a row previous to that!

The season's leading goalscorer Charlie Wayman was forced to sit out the game with a heavy cold and he was replaced by Eddie Quigley, returning to the side for the first time since illness cost him his place the previous November.

North End kicked off playing towards the Town End on a fine bright afternoon, although a strong easterly wind made conditions chilly. Morrison created an early headed opening for Horton and Quigley shot narrowly wide before the latter, after breaking clear, forced a great save out of Robinson. Quigley looked lively throughout the game, obviously believing he had something to prove and he gave Neil Franklin the former England centre-half, a very difficult afternoon. Hull however, were not going to lie down and let the Champions elect enjoy the afternoon and silver-haired veteran Raich Carter kept the Doc busy with some fancy footwork.

Midway through the first-half, Finney wove his way into the Hull penalty area only to be scythed down by Jenson, but the referee rejected the claims for what looked like a flagrant penalty offence. He also turned down Horton's appeal for handball in the area a few minutes later!

Hull could have taken the lead completely against the run of play but Gerrie failed to convert Harrison's cross.

With just three minutes of the first-half remaining, FINNEY showed his international class to give the Lilywhites an interval lead. North End won a corner on the left and Morrison drilled the ball low into the area, Bobby Beattie managed to lay it off and Finney ran past a Hull defender and hit a snap shot past Robinson.

After the resumption, Quigley was again in the thick of the action but the goal he was so desperately striving for, just would not come. He had chance after chance but luck was not with him on the day, although his movement and intelligent forward play earned him the applause of the large crowd. At the end of the game, it could really have been as big a score as the game two months earlier against Barnsley. But, it was not just about the scoreline, but promotion back to the top flight and at the end of an excellent season, that was what Will Scott's team had achieved.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington in the Lancashire Evening Post, speaking about Quigley's return said: 'It must have been highly encouraging to Quigley to find all his colleagues playing to him as if they wanted nothing better than a goal from their comrade. It was typical of the team spirit prevalent at Deepdale this season.'

Manchester United v Preston North End

Saturday 29th September 1951

North End beat eventual Champions on their own ground

Final Score	**Manchester United 1 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Old Trafford
Scorers	**Manchester United:** (Aston)
	PNE: (Quigley, Wayman)
Attendance	53,454
Referee	A. E. Ellis (Halifax)
Line-ups	**Manchester United:** Allen; Carey; Redman; Gibson; Chilton; Cockburn; Berry; Walton; Aston; Pearson; Rowley;
	PNE: Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Beattie; Wayman; Quigley; Morrison;

After the promotion success of the previous season, this campaign was all about consolidation, so the eventual seventh spot was an excellent placing for North End and one of the best results was this win at Old Trafford against a United side who would eventually be crowned First Division champions.

A crowd of 53,454 crammed into the ground, many of whom were accommodated under United's wide, spacious new stand, erected earlier this year to replace the one destroyed in the 1940 blitz.

A beautiful through ball from Cockburn to Aston brought danger in the first minute and though Cunningham forced the ball out for a corner, United's next attack in the third minute brought the game's opening goal. Rowley took the ball down the Preston right and centred for the unmarked ASTON. He hit what could have been a cross but the ball went past Gooch and hit the right-hand post, running along the line and into the back of the net. North End's Joe Marston made a desperate attempt to clear the danger but only succeeded in helping the ball over the line!

The early setback didn't deter North End and they settled down to play some nice football using both wings to attack the United back-line. Their thoroughly deserved equaliser came after 11 minutes following a long clearance by Scott. Morrison controlled the ball before smartly turning inside and scooping a pass to Wayman. He then headed on to his strike partner QUIGLEY who beat Allen with a hard low shot.

United responded with a period of pressure, their supporters expecting a quick return but Marston redeemed himself for failing earlier, clearing a Pearson shot off the line with Gooch beaten. The United striker should have scored in the closing stages of the first-half but he blazed over the bar from point-blank range.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington of the Lancashire Evening Post wrote 'Preston North End achieved a splendid performance by beating Manchester United on their own ground where they had not lost any of the previous 16 games. It was a triumph for tenacity, perseverance and faith in football skill. North End's forwards although having their thin period, worked with far superior blend and harmony than United's disappointing and ragged attack. Both Preston goals were excellent efforts of sharp shooting after sparkling combination.'

In the second-half both sides failed to make the most of the goalscoring opportunities that came their way with Wayman and Rowley being the worst culprits. Eventually though, North End's perseverance finally paid off with what turned out to be the winning goal.

It began with a long ball out of defence to Tom Finney from Willie Cunningham. The wing wizard then showed his international class by weaving his way through the United defence before playing a simple ball through to WAYMAN who couldn't miss from only three yards out, beating Allen with consummate ease. United tried in vain to come back, Gooch hurling himself at Walton's feet in the closing stages but in the end there were many North End supporters making the short trip home with a big smile on their faces.

Willie Cunningham was an ever present in 1951-52 season.

Arsenal v Preston North End

Saturday 16th February 1952

Honours even in great game

Final Score	**Arsenal 3 Preston North End 3**
Venue	Highbury
Scorers	**Arsenal:** (Lewis 2, Roper)
	PNE: (Wayman 3)
Attendance	59,349
Referee	R. Wood (Sunderland)
Line-ups	**Arsenal:** Swindin; Barnes; Smith; Forbes; Daniel; Mercer; Cox; Logie; Lewis; Lishman; Roper;
	PNE: Gooch; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Dunn; Finney; Foster; Wayman; Beattie; Morrison;

Only a day after the funeral of the King, almost 60,000 packed into Highbury to see North End come back three times and return home with a well-earned point. Even in those days, the Arsenal defence was known as a resolute and some would say mean defence, so to score three against them, was an impressive feat.

North End were quickly on the back foot with Docherty having to intercept a low centre from Roper and Cunningham having to be watchful of Roper's movement. There were only three minutes on the clock when LEWIS grabbed the opener, leaping high above the North End defence to bullet a header past Gooch from a well flighted Cox cross.

Preston were forced back, their only opportunities coming from counter-attacks. After Beattie had spurned a good chance, beautifully crafted by Wayman and Morrison, the Gunners went to the other end and extended their lead. It was ROPER, a nippy forward who got the goal, a fine solo effort. He received the ball from Lewis and weaved his way past Docherty and Scott and a lunging tackle from Cunningham before shooting low past Gooch.

After 20 minutes, Wayman took the ball out to the left and played it back inside to Morrison; he crossed the ball to where Beattie was stood and the Scotsman hit a shot that came back off the underside of the bar. Beattie was able to recover the ball but he saw his second effort also strike the woodwork! Shortly after however, Finney and Beattie combined to carve out an opening for WAYMAN whose first time shot beat Swindin.

Arsenal went further ahead on 37 minutes when Forbes gave Logie the ball with a short inside pass and then he flicked the ball into the path of LEWIS who added his second with a sharp shot from 12 yards out. A minute later, North End were back in the game when WAYMAN netted his and the Whites' second goal, shooting through a crowd of players that left Swindin unsighted.

The second-half continued where the first had left off with both sides playing some wonderful flowing football. North End should have been awarded a penalty on the hour mark when Wayman was brought down by the Arsenal 'keeper after Finney had surged past Smith and played the North End centre-forward into a goalscoring position. Shortly afterwards, Angus Morrison headed against Swindin's crossbar but with time running out, it looked like North End would not get the point they obviously deserved.

It was the last minute when North End's persistence finally paid off, WAYMAN the hero,

completing his hat-trick from a Beattie pass. The goal gave Arsenal no chance of coming back and was just rewards for the efforts of the North End players. There would have been no argument from the large crowd who had seen one of the best football matches witnessed in London for some years.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington was surprised that North End had posed so many threats to the Arsenal defence. He said 'Preston North End are still without a victory this year but will not be much longer if they continue to play with the spirit, skill and team-work shown at Highbury where Wayman who did the hat-trick was outstanding in a persistent forward line. Although two goals down within 15 minutes through inability to cope with Arsenal's brilliant opportunism, the visitors impressed the crowd with both their perseverance and stylish football and merited their draw.'

Four goal Charlie Wayman was one of North End's most prolific goal scorers during the fifties.

Tottenham Hotspur v Preston North End

Saturday 21st February 1953

Well earned point marred by poor defending

Final Score	**Tottenham Hotspur 4 Preston North End 4**
Venue	White Hart Lane
Scorers	**Tottenham Hotspur:** (Duquemin 3, Walters) **PNE:** (Finney, Wayman, Morrison, Lewis)
Attendance	50,070
Referee	A. W. Luty (Leeds)
Line-ups	**Tottenham Hotspur:** Ditchburn; Ramsey; Willis; Nicholson; Clarke; Burgess; Walters; Bennett; Duquemin; Baily; Medley; **PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Lewis; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison;

With Spurs playing in their usual white shirts, North End were in their alternative colours of royal blue shirts and white shorts. Having been beaten by Spurs in an FA Cup fourth round replay, they were determined to get something out of this league encounter.

North End had the better of the early play with Baxter seeing two good attempts foiled by some good goalkeeping by Ditchburn. The North End defence looked shaky under pressure and after just five minutes play, Spurs took the lead. Bennett found Medley out wide and his cross was met by DUQUEMIN whose half-hearted hook shot easily beat Thompson who seemed to be caught in two minds and made no attempt to save. Three minutes later, the home side extended their lead when WALTERS latched on to Baily's pass before beating Thompson from the narrowest of angles.

North End rallied and in the 12th minute pulled a goal back through FINNEY who surged through the Spurs defence before shooting past the advancing Ditchburn.

Finney was at his elusive best, carving out an opening for Wayman, although he was adjudged offside - and then showed his artistry by weaving past the Spurs defence to give Morrison a shooting chance, which Ditchburn turned away for a corner. A Finney free-kick was also acrobatically saved by Ditchburn, diving through a crowd of players to punch the ball clear. An equaliser was always on the cards and it duly arrived on the half-hour mark. It started with an attractive move on the right-and side which presented Morrison with another shooting chance. His effort beat Ditchburn but Nicholson was on the line to block the ball but he couldn't prevent WAYMAN snapping up the rebound from close range.

Spurs fought back and Bennett clipped the crossbar before the home side scored twice in two minutes just before the interval. The first was a move started and finished by Len DUQUEMIN who converted Medley's cross, heading firmly past Thompson. North End hadn't recovered from this setback when Walters' deep cross was missed by both Thompson and Marston, leaving DUQUEMIN to crash home his third and Spurs' fourth goal of the half.

The home side came out full of confidence after their two late first-half goals and Thompson had to be alert to keep out efforts from Walters and Duquemin who should have done better after eluding his marker Marston.

On 55 minutes, Angus MORRISON pulled a goal back, hitting a well-judged shot into Ditchburn's left-hand corner, after being fed by Wayman. North End almost equalised when Finney played in by Wayman forced Ditchburn into making a fine save. The Spurs 'keeper could

only parry another Finney shot and LEWIS drove powerfully into the roof of the net from the edge of the area.

The Deepdale outfit pushed forward in search of a winner but Ditchburn was in outstanding form, saving from Morrison twice, Lewis, Wayman and Finney. At the end of the season an extra point would have made all the difference but after a game like that one, one point was as good as two!

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington was not impressed by the defending that day, he said 'North End's defence had a bad day at Tottenham due to poor covering and becoming easily flustered. Nevertheless it was a fine performance to save the game after twice being two goals down. The sad part of it from Preston's viewpoint was that a defence which had far less to do than the Tottenham rearguard should be beaten four times and have reason to reflect that three of the four ought not to have been scored.'

North End played Tottenham three times in a month starting with a 2-2 draw in the FA Cup (pictured). This was followed with a 1-0 defeat in a fourth round replay at White Hart Lane prior to the 4-4 League stalemate.

Preston North End v Arsenal

Saturday 25th April 1953

Championship showdown

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Arsenal 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Finney pen, Wayman)
	Arsenal: (-)
Attendance	39,537
Referee	C. W. Bucknall (Birmingham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Scott; Docherty; Marston; Dunn; Finney; Lewis; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison;
	Arsenal: Swindin; Wade; Smith; Forbes; Daniel; Shaw; Roper; Logie; Goring; Lishman; Marden;

There were two matches left for both North End and Arsenal and before the game, the Whites were two points behind in the Championship with an inferior goal difference. A win was vital to keep the hopes of the town alive and then it was down to beating Derby at the Baseball Ground and hoping local rivals Burnley could do North End a favour and take a point off the Gunners. First though, the two points had to be won at Deepdale (Wolves in third place completed their fixtures the same day with a defeat at Spurs, making it a two horse race for the title).

Almost 40,000 packed inside Deepdale anticipating a fraught encounter and certainly both sides looked nervous in the opening exchanges. Arsenal were doubling up on Finney and every one of the North Londoners had been clearly drilled into doing their share of defending when required.

North End looked the more composed team the longer the game went on and Finney was beginning to get the better of his two markers. In the 28th minute he created a splendid chance for Baxter but his accurate first time shot hit a covering defender with Swindin nowhere. Six minutes later, North End took the lead and again Finney was at the heart of it. He had beaten Smith and was in a threatening position in the Arsenal box when the Gunners' skipper came up behind him and took the winger's legs from underneath him. The referee had no alternative but to point to the spot. FINNEY got up, dusted himself off and drilled the penalty past Swindin into the back of the Town End goal. Smith, an England defender had been made to look very uncomfortable by Finney and as a result, Lewis was reveling in the extra time and space, creating opportunities for Wayman and Morrison but at the break it was still 1-0.

It was still all North End when the second-half got underway and Baxter missed a very good chance to extend his side's lead after being put in by Wayman. Arsenal began to visibly tire and a second goal looked imminent.

The Gunners were falling back in desperation when Baxter found WAYMAN unmarked. He took no time at all to size-up a left-footed shot that rifled into the net from all of 25 yards.

Arsenal tried to get back in the game, pushing Roper further forward in an effort to get a goal

back but the North End defence held out and moved on to the final game of the season. The Whites travelled to the Baseball Ground the following Wednesday where a Tom Finney penalty put them top of the First Division by two points. The North End players and fans were devastated two days later when Arsenal beat Burnley 3-2 to win the title on goal difference.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington was more than impressed by the North End performance, he said 'Usually it is Arsenal who rise to full power for the big occasion, especially when visiting Lancashire but in the vital championship decider, watched by 40,000 at Deepdale, Preston North End gave them a lesson in tactics and ball skill to win without any questioning of their just title to success. In my long experience, I have ever seen an Arsenal side as outclassed or as ragged and bereft of design and studied purpose. They played as if weary and heavy laden. In football scheming and distribution there was no comparison between the rivals. Preston not only had the initiative for fully two-thirds of the game but so frequently had Arsenal at full stretch that even the customary regimented defensive drill was missing.'

Baxter joined North End in the 1952-53 season as a replacement for Bobbie Beattie. He went on to make 245 league appearances for the Whites.

Preston North End v Leicester City

Monday 22nd March 1954

North End reach semi-final at third attempt

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Leicester City 1**
Venue	Hillsborough
Scorers	**PNE:** (Baxter, Foster, Finney)
	Leicester City: (Rowley)
Attendance	44,588
Referee	A. Holland (Barnsley)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Foster; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison;
	Leicester City: Anderson; Milburn; Jackson; Baldwin; Gillies; Russell; Griffiths; Morris; Hines; Rowley; Dryburgh;

Five days after the first replay at Deepdale had ended 2-2 after extra-time, the teams met again, this time at the neutral venue of Hillsborough. Many people in Preston took the day off and lost a day's pay for not turning in and the 'football special' left Preston station jam packed, three minutes early, despite very few early bookings. A second 'special' had to be quickly arranged. Other supporters got on the coaches at Starchhouse Square, amongst them seven-year-old Bobby Roe of Walton-le-Dale, the team mascot for three years, who was already dressed in his North End strip.

A Tom Finney diving header helped North End to a 3-1 victory.

A dropped ball in the game's opening minute caused an incident more akin to a present day Serie'A' game. Rowley went down in a tussle with Foster and writhed around on the floor as though he had been shot. Not surprisingly, he made a miraculous recovery and the referee let play continue much to the chagrin of the Leicester fans, who let their feelings known with a barrage of boos and cat-calls! Jackson and Russell were doubling up on Tom Finney. On one occasion the former robbed Finney from behind with a full-blooded tackle, using his arms and elbows to come away with the ball.

North End got the game's first goal in the 17th minute when Charlie Wayman challenged the Foxes 'keeper Anderson for the ball. It ran loose to BAXTER, who running in at speed, drove the ball on the volley into the roof of the net.

The Whites pressed further, looking to add to their opener and Jackson twice more upended Finney with the free-kicks creating scoring opportunities for Wayman and Morrison. Despite the close attention from Jackson and Russell, Finney was getting a lot of joy down the right-hand side. He gave Leicester a shock with a sudden left-foot shot which swerved just inches wide of Anderson's right-hand post.

Russell's quick thinking set up a glorious opportunity for Dryburgh but Thompson was quickly out to snatch the ball off his toes. North End had another escape in the 40th minute when Docherty lost possession and Morris shot straight at Thompson.

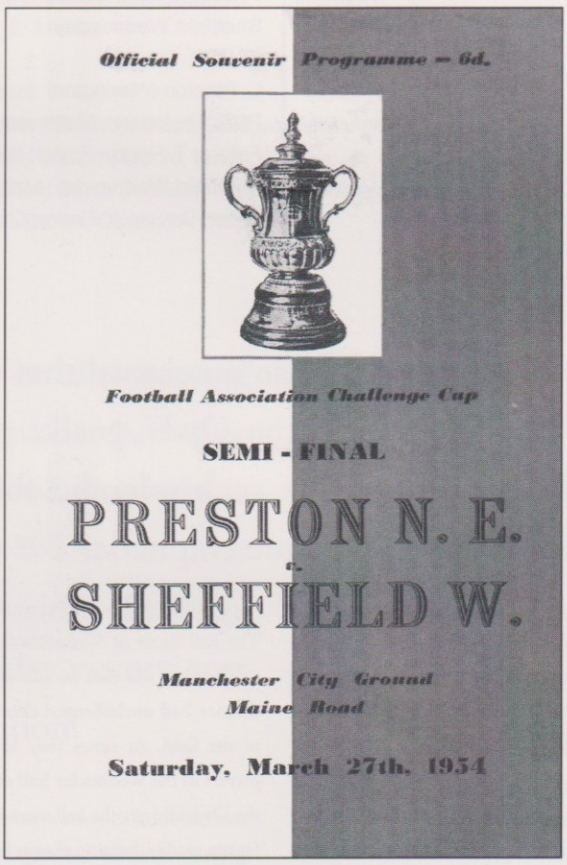
North End started the second-half sluggishly and Thompson was forced to make an outstanding one-handed save to keep the Whites lead intact. With almost an hour of the game gone, North End went further ahead. FOSTER took the ball to the by-line and then hit a shot cum cross straight over Anderson's head and into the far corner of the net. The Foxes clawed their way back into the game with a disputed goal. It arrived in the 67th minute when as ROWLEY's shot entered the net, the linesman's flag went up for offside. Mr Holland the referee overruled his assistant's decision after the North End players had allowed Rowley to run on unchallenged.

Leicester now had the bit between their teeth and five minutes later it was their turn to complain. Griffiths burst through and beat Thompson for what he thought was the equaliser but the referee had spotted an earlier infringement.

FINNEY made the game safe ten minutes from time with a fine header from a deep cross by Forbes. This took the wind out of the Foxes efforts, North End progressing to the semi-final of the FA Cup for the first time since winning the trophy back in 1938.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington described some of the scenes in Preston on the morning before the game. 'Most supporters carried parcels and carrier bags of food and drink. The plan on arrival at Sheffield was straightforward-a beeline for the turnstiles to get the best possible place on the ground with 'eats' as and when time permitted.'



Victory over Leicester secured North End's place in the semi-final at Maine Road.

Preston North End v Sheffield Wednesday

Saturday 27th March 1954

Finney brilliance helps Whites reach Wembley

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Sheffield Wednesday 0**
Venue	Maine Road
Scorers	**PNE:** (Wayman, Baxter)
	Sheffield Wednesday: (-)
Attendance	75,213
Referee	E. Plinston (Warrington)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Mattinson; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; T. Finney; Foster; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison;
	Sheffield Wednesday: McIntosh; Curtis; Seemley; Gannon; Butler; Davies; A. Finney; Quixall; Shaw; Sewell; Woodhead;

Sheffield Wednesday were so outclassed that the truth of the matter is, that if the Owls' goalkeeper Dave McIntosh had not been in such splendid form, their defeat would have been more emphatic.

The Maine Road crowd would not lightly forget how Tom Finney rose to the occasion and served up one of the most dominant wing displays for a long time.

His namesake Alan Finney, the Wednesday winger made two promising runs down the right in the first couple of minutes but after that, it was virtually all North End.

On 11 minutes, a header by Charlie Wayman from a Morrison corner flashed just outside McIntosh's right-hand post whilst a minute later, the North End centre-forward forced the Wednesday 'keeper into diving bravely at his feet. McIntosh then saved at point blank range from Foster, fisting his shot over the bar. Baxter's through ball was met by Wayman but his powerful strike was well held by McIntosh.

The real cause of Wednesday's failure to make any impact, was that far too often North End's defence had unchallenged control of the centre of the field. At times they had eight or nine players in the Wednesday half of the field. When the Owls did get the ball away it was back again far too readily, because players like Docherty and Forbes at wing-half and full-backs Mattinson and Walton were well upfield and able to return the ball to their forwards.

Yet despite all the pressure, the first-half ended goalless due not only to McIntosh's brilliant goalkeeping but also some weak, hesitant finishing by the North End forwards.

Though there had been no goals, the Yorkshire club must have realised that their chances of playing at Wembley were remote and it could only be a matter of time before North End scored.

The opening goal came on the hour mark when Finney centred first time and WAYMAN rose above the Wednesday defence to finally beat McIntosh.

Shortly afterwards, Sewell was tackled by Docherty as he shaped to shoot. The Wednesday player, the referee and those around him thought he had broken his leg. Fortunately, it was merely a knock on a nerve at the side of the knee that numbed the limb. The fact that he was carried off on a stretcher by the ambulance men in such circumstances set the game aflame.

There were a number of regrettable incidents in the last ten minutes or so before Finney beat three or four defenders in a mazy dribble and set up BAXTER for the second goal.

North End could have had a third in the dying seconds of the game but Wayman rather than shoot himself, tried to give Finney an open goal and miscued his pass.

Tottenham Hotspur v Preston North End

Monday 19th April 1954

Deputy Hatsell nets hat-trick

Final Score	**Tottenham Hotspur 2 Preston North End 6**
Venue	White Hart Lane
Scorers	**Tottenham Hotspur:** (Bennett, Dunmore) **PNE:** (Hatsell 3, Foster, Baxter pen, Morrison)
Attendance	30,206
Referee	G. McCabe (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**Tottenham Hotspur:** Ditchburn; Baker; Willis; Nicholson; Clarke; Wetton; Walters; Bennett; Dunmore; Brooks; Owen; **PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Campbell; Foster; Hatsell; Baxter; Morrison;

Cup finalists Preston North End completely outplayed Spurs at White Hart Lane. The match was virtually settled by half-time when North End led 4-1 and they hammered home their advantage with two more goals in the second-half.

Tom Finney was a spectator because of a slight calf injury and centre-forward Charlie Wayman was another absentee from the Preston attack, because his mother had died during the weekend.

North End had the better of the early exchanges and took the lead after only eight minutes when Foster chased a loose ball and centred from the left-wing. Wetton intervened, but failed to control the bouncing ball and involuntarily handled. BAXTER scored from the spot, sending Ditchburn the wrong way. North End went 2-0 up after 14 minutes when HATSELL went past Clarke with ease after taking a long pass from Morrison and scored with a powerful drive from 15 yards out.

A minute later, Spurs reduced the arrears as DUNMORE went racing through to collect Walters' pass and score from close range. Thompson got a hand to the ball but couldn't prevent it crossing the line.

North End were playing some good open football and HATSELL extended their lead with a spectacular goal. Receiving the ball from Docherty, he sold a perfect dummy to Nicholson before hitting a terrific left-foot shot past Spurs' England 'keeper Ted Ditchburn. When FOSTER scored a fourth goal after 29 minutes, cleverly side-stepping Clarke and placing his shot out of Ditchburn's reach, Spurs were almost dead and buried. The London club had been outpaced and outplayed.

In the opening minutes of the second-half, Baxter beat Ncholson to a Morrison through ball but Ditchburn came to the home side's rescue as Foster closed in on the inside-forward's pass. Then Docherty, Foster and Hatsell carved a way through the Spurs defence and Wetton had to kick behind to stop North End going further ahead.

A lucky bounce for Spurs gave Dunmore a clear run on goal but his shot from 20 yards was deflected for a corner.

North End went 5-1 up after 69 minutes when Campbell's cross hit the post and rebounded to HATSELL who made no mistake from point-blank range. Two minutes later, North End scored a sixth goal through MORRISON whose shot from fully 35 yards went in off the foot of the post - Ditchburn obviously thought the ball would go wide.

Spurs were never in the same class as Preston though BENNETT scored a second goal for the White Hart Lane side two minutes from time.

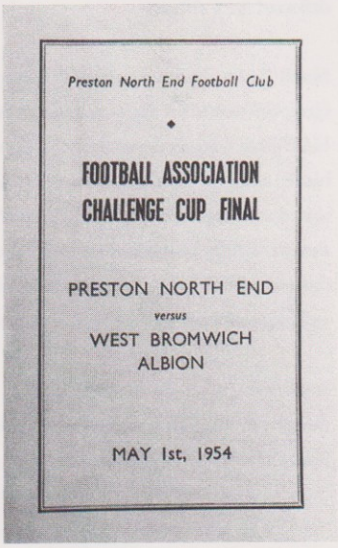
Preston North End v West Bromwich Albion

Saturday 1st May 1954

Final dreams end in tears

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 West Bromwich Albion 3**
Venue	Wembley
Scorers	**PNE:** (Morrison, Wayman) **WBA:** (Allen 2 (1 pen), Griffin)
Attendance	100,000
Referee	A. W. Luty (Leeds)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Foster; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison; **WBA:** Sanders; Kennedy; Millard; Dudley; Dugdale; Barlow; Griffin; Ryan; Allen; Nicholls; Lee;

North End supporters were confident that their team would win the FA Cup, having scored more League and Cup goals than any other First Division team. Yet West Bromwich Albion, having finished runners-up in the League Championship, were out to make sure of the other half of the seemingly impossible 'double'.



The Duke of Gloucester was to have attended the Final and the teams and FA Officials were to have been presented to him. But it was announced that he had laryngitis and could not attend. His place was taken by the Queen Mother, who would also present the Cup and medals.

Many supporters from Preston had travelled throughout the night. The West End was soon dotted with sightseers as rival supporters greeted one another with rattles and bells.

Both teams spent so much time sizing up each other, that for long periods there was little real action and little good football to go with it. Tom Finney of course would shine in any company and his twinkling feet and baffling body-swerve several times had the Albion captain Len Millard running about like a scolded cat! Fortunately for West Brom, left-half Barlow dropped back to cover and so Finney who had dictated most of North End's cup-ties was not allowed to take command at Wembley.

Albion took the lead after 21 minutes when North End's Willie Cunningham gifted them the goal. With all the time in the world to clear, he waited until Lee was virtually on top of him, took a wild kick and the ball rebounded off the winger. Lee pounced on it and a hard low cross found Ronnie ALLEN sliding into an open space and giving Thompson no chance.

Albion's joy was short-lived, and a minute later, North End were level. Docherty crossed the ball to MORRISON who smartly headed the equaliser. Two minutes afterwards, the Whites almost took the lead when Wayman crashed a 25-yard shot against the Albion crossbar with Sanders well beaten.

Six minutes into the second-half, a Marston-Docherty then Finney-Foster move saw the ball

played through to Wayman. Looking a couple of yards offside, the Albion defence hesitated but WAYMAN went on to place the ball past Sanders and put North End 2-1 up.

After 63 minutes, Barlow, who had defended so resolutely for Albion, stormed his way through the North End defence before colliding with Docherty just inside the penalty area. The referee pointed to the penalty spot and ALLEN, as in the semi-final win over Port Vale, took the kick. North End 'keeper George Thompson managed to get both hands to the ball but the pace beat him and it was all-square at 2-2.

Then with only two minutes left, Reg Ryan sent out a delightful pass to Frank GRIFFIN. The winger cut into the middle and showing commendable coolness, rammed the ball across the chest of goalkeeper Thompson into the far corner of the Preston net.

1954 was the year in which the public hoped that Tom Finney would emulate the performance the year before of that other great winger, Stan Matthews, and win a Cup winners' medal - sadly the miracle did not happen again!

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington of the Lancashire Evening Post wrote: 'Well done West Bromwich Albion, the 1953-54 Cup winners and League runners-up. Tenacity and determination earned this long established club a second Cup Final victory against their old rivals Preston North End and afforded rich compensation for an eventual fade-out in the League. The Wembley result was a bitter disappointment to the Preston team and supporters, buoyed up if anything by over-confidence, especially in Finney, the forward whose exceptional ability had contributed so much to their success in the previous five rounds. Wishful thinking that North End could not lose with Finney in the team was so general that his failure to sway the game's fortunes in any respect was an anti-climax that stunned his multitude of admirers.'

Two of the Nation's favourites, HRH The Queen Mother and Sir Tom Finney greeting North End's Cup Final team.

Preston North End v Manchester City

Saturday 21st August 1954

Season starts with a bang

Final Score	**Preston North End 5 Manchester City 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Wayman 3, Foster, Baxter)
	Manchester City: (-)
Attendance	33,098
Referee	J. H. Clough (Bolton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Foster; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison;
	Manchester City: Trautmann; Leivers; Meadows; McTavish; Ewing; Paul; Spurdle; McAdams; Revie; Hart; Clarke;

For Frank Hill, former Burnley chief and ex-Scottish international, the occasion marked the beginning of his first season as manager of North End. There were no last minute changes, so North End fielded the team which carried them to their Wembley final the previous May.

Straight from the kick-off, North End's mood was irresistible. For virtually the whole of the opening ten minutes the Whites kept possession and were rewarded with an early goal, BAXTER firing home through a crowd of players, past an unsighted Bert Trautmann in the City goal. North End were unlucky not to add to that opening goal with both Wayman and Morrison bringing fine saves out of the German-born 'keeper. Foster just failed to reach Finney's cross but McTavish in attempting to clear the danger, sliced the ball towards his own goal, forcing Trautmann into making yet another important save.

How City went in at half-time only one goal down is a mystery!

The second-half was less than a minute old when North End doubled their lead, FOSTER fastening on to a through pass from Docherty, rounding Trautmann and rolling the ball into an empty net. Docherty was having a great game and was at the hub of all North End's attacks. A last ditch tackle by Jimmy Meadows prevented Finney from adding a third goal and Trautmann then flung himself full length to turn Baxter's shot round the post.

On 77 minutes, Charlie WAYMAN, who had hurt his leg in a fierce tussle with Dave Ewing, received a pass from Foster and went on to shoot past the advancing Trautmann.

Though City had experimented by playing four up front, they were hardly seen as an attacking force and George Thompson had one of his quietest afternoons.

Three minutes after opening his account, WAYMAN was on target again. The North End striker received an inch-perfect pass from Tom Finney, side-stepped Bill Leivers' desperate lunging tackle and fired home past Trautmann. With just minutes remaining, WAYMAN completed his hat-trick and in doing so, made it 5-0 for North End. Despite his leg injury, he beat Ewing to the ball, went round Trautmann and rolled the ball towards the empty net. Though Jimmy Meadows made a valiant effort to retrieve the situation, he could only join the ball in the back of the City net!

North End could quite easily have reached double figures in a very one-sided game.

Preston North End v Cardiff City

Wednesday 1st September 1954

Slaughter of the innocents

Final Score	**Preston North End 7 Cardiff City 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Foster 2, Wayman 2, Finney, Baxter, Morrison) **Cardiff City:** (Grant)
Attendance	29,057
Referee	R. H. Mann (Worcester)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Finney; Foster; Wayman; Baxter; Morrison; **Cardiff City:** Vearncombe; Utter; Sherwood; Baker; Frowen; Harrington; Tiddy; R.Williams; Grant; Northcott; Edwards;

Cardiff City sustained their second heaviest defeat during 34 years of Football League membership as they were completely outplayed by a North End side who gave a brilliant display of football. In fact, if the Whites had not eased up, they must have set a new record, because they looked quite capable of taking their total into double figures!

However, it was the Bluebirds who had the better of the early exchanges with Grant heading just wide from a Tiddy cross and then having penalty claims turned down after Grant had been upended in the area by Walton. Preston took the lead in the seventh minute following a Docherty-Wayman-Morrison movement. BAXTER with the Cardiff defence appealing for offside, had an easy task to go through and beat Vearncombe.

A minute later, the visitors equalised. GRANT got possession to the right of the North End goalmouth and although he appeared to be too close to the by-line, he scored with a powerful shot which gave Thompson no possible chance. North End soon recovered and made five quick attacks in as many minutes before FINNEY put them ahead. He cut inside Sherwood, before hitting a low left-foot shot past the City 'keeper. Midway through the first-half, North End extended their lead when FOSTER, receiving the ball chest high, let it drop to his feet and sent a fierce drop shot over the head of Vearncombe. As the half wore on, Sherwood improved against Finney and as a result, the North End attack didn't look as menacing. Morrison should have scored a fourth goal just before half-time. In front of goal and only a couple of yards out, he looped his shot and Vearncombe was able to turn the ball away for a corner.

Early in the second-half, the Cardiff 'keeper saved well from Wayman but it was only a temporary respite, for immediately afterwards, Preston increased their lead. Vearncombe dived for the ball which struck him on the legs before rebounding to the feet of FOSTER who made no mistake from close in.

North End now had the match completely in hand and their football showed this. The Whites scored three goals in the space of ten minutes, the first by MORRISON, who converted an accurate cross from Finney. Charlie WAYMAN, whose return to the forward-line made a marked difference to the harmony and balance of the side, headed home another Finney cross and then scored in a goalmouth melee, though at first it was mistakenly credited to Forbes who merely made sure after WAYMAN's shot had crossed the line and been kicked back.

Charlton Athletic v Preston North End

Saturday 30th April 1955

Waterhouse hits first-half hat-trick to destroy Charlton

Final Score	**Charlton Athletic 0 Preston North End 4**
Venue	The Valley
Scorers	**Charlton Athletic:** (-) **PNE:** (Waterhouse 3, Baxter)
Attendance	15,120
Referee	S. Rogers (Shrewsbury)
Line-ups	**Charlton Athletic:** Bartram; Campbell; Townsend; Hewie; Ufton; Pembery; Hurst; O'Linn; Leary; Firmani; Kiernan; **PNE:** Thompson; Mattinson; Wilson; Docherty; Marston; Forbes; Campbell; Waterhouse; Higham; Baxter; Foster;

A first-half hat-trick by Ken Waterhouse had Charlton Athletic reeling at The Valley and but for three great saves by Sam Bartram, the Addicks would have been routed.

Charlton had an early escape when in the first minute, Docherty put over a long ground pass which found Waterhouse standing unmarked on the six-yard line. The inside-right was unable to control the ball and Bartram left his goal line to clear. Waterhouse didn't have too long to wait to make amends. Only three minutes had been played when Higham forced Ufton to concede a corner on the left and Campbell returned Foster's kick into the goalmouth where WATERHOUSE hit a rising shot past Bartram. Minutes later, Higham harried Ufton into giving away another corner but the kick was cleared.

Charlton's Pembery held the ball too long and Foster beat him in the tackle. Only a great flying save by Bartram kept out Foster's powerfully struck shot. Soon after, Waterhouse got in another good shot which Bartram at full stretch tipped round the post. North End were forced to defend deep midway through the first-half and Marston kicked a Firmani shot off the line with Thompson beaten. O'Linn did have the ball in the Preston net but the referee disallowed the 'goal' for an earlier infringement.

Then in the 33rd minute WATERHOUSE scored again. He picked up a pass from Docherty, veered to the right and hit a great right-foot shot high and just inside Bartram's far post. Two minutes before half-time, WATERHOUSE completed his hat-trick, hooking a Baxter pass into the bottom corner of Bartram's net, well out of the 'keeper's reach.

North End were soon on the attack after the restart and Ufton had to come right across to the left to dispossess Foster. Then came a poor clearance by Campbell which went to Higham standing in the Charlton penalty area, but the North End centre-forward completely missed his kick with just Bartram to beat.

In Charlton's first attack of the second-half, Hurst got a high centre to Eddie Firmani but Thompson left his line to claim the ball in fine style. The home side's supporters began the slow handclap and Kiernan answered by getting in a fine centre which Thompson had to collect again at full stretch.

Then after 57 minutes North End scored their fourth goal. Higham placed a pass cleverly inside Ufton to BAXTER who took the ball forward before beating the advancing Bartram. North End continued to have the better of the final third of the game with Bartram producing one fine save after another. The 4-0 exhibition for the most part was brilliant and North End supporters were left wondering why their side couldn't show something resembling this form at Deepdale.

Blackpool v Preston North End

Saturday 29th October 1955

Seasiders humiliated as North End hit six

Final Score	**Blackpool 2 Preston North End 6**
Venue	Bloomfield Road
Scorers	**Blackpool:** (Farm, Fenton pen)
	PNE: (Hatsell 2, Finney, Thompson, Baxter, Morrison)
Attendance	25,692
Referee	E. Hill (Chester)
Line-ups	**Blackpool:** Farm; Armfield; Wright; Fenton; Gratrix; H. Kelly; Matthews; Taylor; Mudie; Durie; Perry;
	PNE: G. Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Mattinson; Forbes; Finney; T. Thompson; Hatsell; Baxter; Morrison;

The free-scoring post-war trend of these 'derby' matches was maintained at Bloomfield Road and though the match was far from a classic encounter, no-one could say it was dull after seeing eight goals.

Seven clashes at Deepdale had yielded 32 goals whilst 31 had been scored at Blackpool, an aggregate of 63 and an average of more than four a game.

As early as the 11th minute of this amazing match, Blackpool's Scottish international goalkeeper George Farm fell after a mid-air collision and took a blow on the elbow which paralysed his right arm. Seven minutes later, he was unable to hold on to HATSELL's speculative shot from 25 yards and then on 23 minutes, another handling error allowed BAXTER to extend North End's lead. Farm then left the field for treatment with full-back Jimmy Armfield going between the posts.

Farm returned on the half-hour mark with his right arm bent at the elbow and tightly bandaged and on his manager's request went to play at centre-forward.

Even before Farm's injury, the Blackpool defence had looked suspect and it was no surprise when Tommy THOMPSON put North End 3-0 up with a powerfully struck shot from the edge of the area. The game's best forward was without doubt, Tom Finney, who even on a day when he was given too few passes, still revealed his class whenever he had the ball.

His England colleague Stanley Matthews was also causing problems for the North End defence and it was from one of the winger's perfectly executed centres, that the injured FARM surprised Thompson in the Preston goal by heading home from the edge of the box.

However, in the main, it was all Preston and Hatsell repeatedly ran Gratrix ragged as the North End defenders hit long balls into the Blackpool half. HATSELL netted his second goal of the game midway through the second-half, fastening on to Walton's pass before slotting the ball past the advancing Armfield.

The Seasiders reduced the arrears when FENTON scored from the spot after Cunningham was harshly adjudged to have fouled Matthews. MORRISON then scored from close range before FINNEY scored a magnificent sixth goal. Dribbling past one man after another, he worked his way into the box before shooting wide of Armfield.

Though no team can give another a 2-0 start, lose its goalkeeper and expect to win, North End were denied full credit for a good performance that ended Blackpool's unbeaten home record.

Preston North End v Manchester United

Saturday 21st January 1956

Old boys shine as North End beat League leaders

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Manchester United 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (T. Thompson, Lewis, Foster)
	Manchester United: (Whelan)
Attendance	28,047
Referee	E. Oxley (South Kirkby)
Line-ups	**PNE:** G. Thompson; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Dunn; Evans; Finney; T. Thompson; Lewis; Baxter; Foster;
	Manchester United: Wood; Foulkes; Byrne; Colman; Jones; Edwards; Scott; Whelan; Webster; Viollet; Page;

Though this was Tom Finney's 300th league game for North End, it was former Manchester United players Joe Walton and Eddie Lewis who stood out. Walton, who left Old Trafford some years earlier, was North End's captain and after winning the toss, opted to play with the driving rain and wind at their backs.

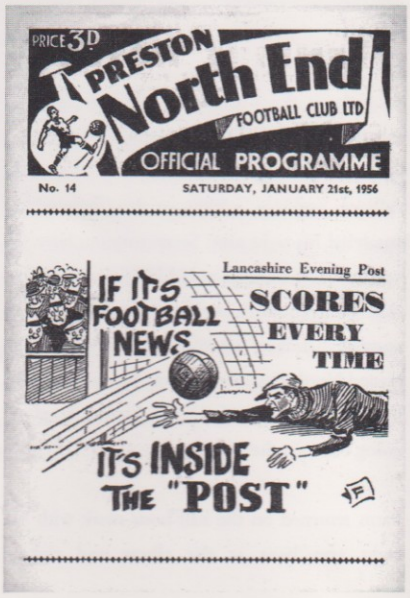
North End took the lead after only eight minutes when Ray Wood failed to hold Tommy Thompson's high dropping shot and Eddie LEWIS was the first to react, smashing the loose ball into an empty net. It was his first goal in Preston colours since his move to Deepdale eight games previously.

United, who had won on each of their last five visits to Deepdale, were stung into action and after Duncan Edwards had gone close with a powerfully struck shot from 30 yards out, they equalised through WHELAN. The United inside-forward scored with a shot from the acutest of angles after Evans had failed to clear Roger Byrne's cross.

The visitors then gained the upper hand and both Webster and Whelan wasted good goalscoring opportunities. Colman and Edwards had long range shots saved by Thompson but as the first-half came to an end, Finney and Lewis had tested Wood with drives from just outside the penalty area.

The second-half was less than two minutes old when North End regained the lead. Tommy THOMPSON whose consistency as a forager and opportunist made him comparable with any inside-forward in the game, was the scorer. Playing a one-two with Lewis, his effort, hit unerringly with his right-foot, beat Ray Wood all ends up.

United pressed hard in search of the equaliser but Walton and Docherty were in outstanding form and after a brief onslaught they were restricted to peppering Thompson's goal with long range shots. As the game wore on, North End began to have the upper hand and though the pitch now resembled a quagmire, Thompson and Finney continued to torment the United rearguard.



The Whites extended their lead five minutes from time when Duncan Edwards was adjudged to have fouled Thompson just outside the box. From the resultant free-kick taken by Willie Cunningham, Wood was again unable to hold the greasy ball. FOSTER was the first to react, beating Foulkes to the rebound and flicking the ball past the prostrate Wood.

Though the Red Devils went on to win the League Championship, finishing 11 points ahead of runners-up Blackpool, the outcome of this meeting emphasised what a good win this was for North End.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington wrote: 'As puzzling as ever with their erratic performances, Preston North End against the League leaders at Deepdale, rose to the form they seem to reserve for high-class opposition. In spite of atrocious conditions - driving rain, a biting wind and mud - they played with spirit and determination, without slackening throughout a testing struggle. Their reward was a 3-1 triumph which ended Manchester United's sequence of five wins at Preston.'

Even the Doc couldn't have guessed in 1956 that he would go on to manage both Manchester United and Preston North End. Docherty is pictured here with Sir Tom Finney and Willie Cunningham.

Preston North End v Birmingham City

Saturday 1st February 1958

North End's brilliance overwhelms the Blues

Final Score	**Preston North End 8 Birmingham City 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thompson 3; Taylor 3; Finney 2)
	Birmingham City: (-)
Attendance	21,511
Referee	B. M. Griffiths (Newport)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Else; Cunningham; Walton; Docherty; Dunn; O'Farrell; Mayers; Thompson; Finney; Baxter; Taylor;
	Birmingham City: Merrick; Hall; Allen; Neal; Smith; Watts; Hooper; Kinsey; Brown; Jones; Govan;

Birmingham City had the unhappy experience of providing Preston North End with their biggest win since 1894 but they earned admiration for the sporting way in which they took their humiliating defeat. The visitors kept their heads and their tempers as Preston continued to play the best football seen at Deepdale for many years.

Few teams could have stood up to this superb display which was made possible by the response of every member of the North End team to the inspiring example set by Tom Finney. It was FINNEY who opened the scoring after five minutes when he headed home a right-wing cross from Mayers. Seven minutes later, the Whites extended their lead with that man FINNEY scoring his and North End's second goal. It was a most spectacular goal as he swerved past one defender after another in a 40-yard run. The great man paused with his foot on the ball before unleashing a 20-yard left-foot shot that beat Gil Merrick all ends up.

Midway through the first-half, Birmingham's international centre-half Trevor Smith shook his head in despair as the 35-year-old Finney beat him for pace before bringing a great save out of Merrick.

Else was eventually tested by Jones and Brown but his best effort was to turn a rising drive from Jeff Hall over the bar. Tommy Docherty underhit a back-pass to Else and the North End 'keeper had to dive bravely at the feet of Jones.

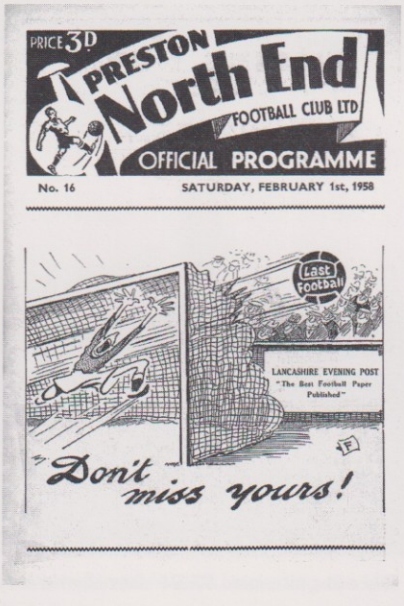
Early in the second-half, Govan and Hooper put over useful crosses but the Birmingham front men were well marked and nothing came of them.

North End went 3-0 up in the 54th minute when Tommy THOMPSON latched on to Frank O'Farrell's through ball before firing past the advancing Merrick. Just after the hour-mark, former Falkirk wide man, Sammy TAYLOR, headed home a deep cross from Mayers. Scotland's captain Tommy Docherty was having a fine game and on 70 minutes he provided the pass from which TAYLOR netted North End's fifth goal. A minute later, Merrick, who was now being left completely at the mercy of the Preston forwards, conceded his sixth goal as THOMPSON fired home from the edge of the area. On 73 minutes, THOMPSON completed his hat-trick with a superb opportunist goal; the former Aston Villa forward crashed the ball home after Finney's shot had been deflected into his path. TAYLOR completed the rout in the 81st minute, when he was left with a simple tap-in.

What the papers said:

Writing in the Lancashire Evening Post, Walter Pilkington was full of praise for North End's emphatic win. He wrote: 'The customary close struggle when Birmingham come to Deepdale did not materialise. Instead the visitors were mastered and finally pulverised, although an hour elapsed before the cracks in their long over-worked defence spread sufficiently to bring about a complete collapse. Preston's 8-0 win was their biggest this century in a First Division match and the team were not flattered by this brilliant and remarkable performance. It was a just result on the play although I cannot agree with one contemptuous suggestion that routed Birmingham were 'a sorry spectacle - little better than a rabble.'

Else, who made his debut for North End in March 1954 against Man City, never had an easier game than this. He hardly touched the ball.



Hat-trick hero Tommy Thompson played in all bar one of North End's League games in 1957-58. He was top scorer with 34 goals.

Wolverhampton Wanderers v Preston North End

Saturday 19th April 1958

Title dream dashed with international stars away

Final Score	**Wolverhampton Wanderers 2 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Molineux
Scorers	**Wolves:** (Deeley, Milne og)
	PNE: (-)
Attendance	46,001
Referee	J. Powell (Rotherham)
Line-ups	**Wolverhampton Wanderers:** Finlayson; Stuart; Harris; Clamp; Showell; Flowers; Deeley; Broadbent; Murray; Booth; Mullen;
	PNE: Else; Cunningham; Walton; Milne; Dunn; O'Farrell; Mayers; Thompson; Hatsell; Farrall; Taylor;

Both teams were without international stars for this top-of-the-table clash - Wright and Slater from Wolves and Finney and Docherty from North End. As Wolves' two internationals had been absent the previous week, the Molineux side were able to retain the team that drew at Burnley whilst Preston brought in Milne at right-half and Hatsell at centre-forward.

Though Wolves had the better of the early exchanges, Else was not seriously troubled, though he had to move smartly twice to get to sharp back passes, first from Dunn and then from Walton. Preston's first attack came about as a result of some inadvisable interpassing by Clamp and Stuart, Mayers being tackled by Harris as he made room to shoot. Wolves too came close in the 11th minute when Deeley's first time shot was deflected behind for a corner with Else beaten. Five minutes later, Deeley tried a chip which although it beat Else, came back off the bar. As the ball bobbled in the goalmouth, Booth went for a header but Else turned the ball one-handed just over the bar for the home side's sixth corner.

Then just to remind Wolves' fans of what they were capable of, North End made a quick breakaway and Mayers running in, hit a first time 25-yard shot inches over Finlayson's crossbar. In the 25th minute, Milne was flustered into making a hasty back-pass to Else, Murray nipped in but in taking the ball from the goalkeeper's grasp, he ran it over the by-line.

Following a free-kick by Stuart, Preston had a real let-off in the 32nd minute when Harris, moving up to the edge of the penalty area, let fly with a screaming left-foot shot which grazed the top of the bar.

Wolves took the lead in the 38th minute when Broadbent going through on his own, switched the ball forward in an intended pass for Deeley but with Else advancing from goal, it struck a defender and rebounded to DEELEY who shot into an empty net. Just before the interval, Booth took a deft pass from Deeley but shot into the side-netting.

Preston came more into the game during the early stages of the second-half with Hatsell's clever flick header bringing a good save out of Malcolm Finlayson.

A Wolves attack was cleared but when the ball went to Mayers, he was unceremoniously pushed into the crowd by Harris who was booked by the referee. The home side almost doubled their lead when Stuart took a smart return pass from Broadbent but shot straight at Else. Although Mayers was limping, North End were now much more in the game and in the 70th minute came near to scoring when

following a corner, Farrall drove inches outside the far post. A corner on the right was headed inches over the bar by Hatsell as North End searched for the equaliser. With the game almost over, MILNE put through his own goal, trying to scoop away a chip by Broadbent to finally settle the Championship issue. That goal and the points it brought put Wolves seven points ahead, three more than North End could attain from their remaining matches.

What the papers said:

John Taylor in his column in the Lancashire Evening Post wrote: 'Preston North End saw Wolverhampton Wanderers duly crowned champions of the League at Molineux on Saturday, doing little to delay the inevitable. It was a poor performance by North End more particularly so by the forwards than the defence. But what an opportunity for a surprise win by the visitors the occasion provided. The North End combination however were not made of the stuff that achieves the unexpected. There never seemed any chance that the Wolves would have their anxiety prolonged to their two remaining games.'

North End had some titanic struggles against Wolves in the 1950s, including the last of them, at Deepdale in 1959-60 season (Pictured). The 2-0 defeat in 1958 effectively handed Wolves the Division One title.

Arsenal v Preston North End

Saturday 20th December 1958

Story-book League baptism for Barton

Final Score	**Arsenal 1 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Highbury
Scorers	**Arsenal:** (Henderson)
	PNE: (Hatsell 2)
Attendance	32,640
Referee	R. Wood (Sunderland)
Line-ups	**Arsenal:** Kelsey; Wills; Evans; Ward; Dodgin; Docherty; Clapton; Groves; Barnwell; Broomfield; Henderson;
	PNE: Barton; Cunningham; O'Neill; Milne; Dunn; O'Farrell; Mayers; Thompson; Hatsell; Baxter; Taylor;

A depleted North End side came out on top in this important clash of championship contenders at Highbury. The Whites were without Joe Walton who thus ended a run of 134 consecutive league games and Fred Else, who was under orders to rest due to slight concussion. They were replaced by John O'Neill and 16-year-old amateur goalkeeper John Barton.

Discovered by George Bargh, Barton, a former schoolboy international triallist, had only played five games in the club's fourth team but with reserve team 'keeper Alan Kelly injured with a fractured wrist, the Orrel youngster was given his debut. When the teams appeared, Barton was immediately surrounded by photographers as he entered his goal for kicking in practice.

As the game got underway, the North End 'keeper was quickly given an early touch to calm his nerves but to be fair, he hardly had any work to do as the Whites did the bulk of the attacking. The game was 14 minutes old when North End took a deserved lead. Tommy Thompson beat former Preston wing-half Tommy Docherty before putting HATSELL into a clear scoring position. The North End striker made no mistake with an accurate, low drive that entered the net off Jack Kelsey's right-hand post. Though they were also without Tom Finney, it was North End who looked the more likely to score the game's second goal. It came on the half-hour mark when North End's Republic of Ireland international wing-half Frank O'Farrell found Mayers with an accurate long pass from the left. The winger crossed on to the had of HATSELL who headed powerfully past Kelsey.

The goal was Hatsell's ninth against the Gunners in just six appearances.

Arsenal made a concerted effort to reduce the arrears and were rewarded in the 39th minute when left-winger HENDERSON cut inside O'Neill and drove a powerful shot past the helpless Barton. Towards the end of the first-half, Willie Cunningham was on hand to head clear a goalbound shot from Jimmy Broomfield.

Immediately after the restart, Barton made a fine save to keep out Barnwell's shot and then dived full length to turn Henderson's shot round the post. Later in the game he fisted a fierce goalbound shot by Barnwell over the bar and held Tommy Docherty's header inches under the bar.

In the dying moments of the game, Dennis Hatsell almost completed his hat-trick, meeting Mayers' cross on the volley. Unfortunately, his shot grazed the outside of

Kelsey's right-hand post with the Welsh international 'keeper a spectator!

The success of John Barton was just one of several good reasons for the obvious elation of the Preston party during the usually tedious journey home.

What the papers said:

Keith Hall writing in the Lancashire Evening Post said: 'In spite of the third successive home defeat of his club, Docherty, Arsenal's captain against Preston North End had some cause for quiet satisfaction. He had seen young Barton, the amateur goalkeeper with whom he regularly used to put in voluntary spare time practice when he was a Preston player, amply fulfill his expectations with a story-book league debut in a North End emergency. It was hardly surprising therefore that the Orrel boy, overcome with emotion and Docherty, whom he still idolises, left the field warmly embracing each other.'

John Barton (pictured above and right) was thrust into the limelight after a late injury to regular 'keeper Fred Else. Barton remains North End's youngest ever 'keeper, although Andy Lonnergan ran him close when playing against Watford in April 2001.

Chelsea v Preston North End

Saturday 22nd August 1959

Finney's last season begins with thriller

Final Score	**Chelsea 4 Preston North End 4**
Venue	Stamford Bridge
Scorers	**Chelsea:** (Greaves 3, Blunstone)
	PNE: (Finney; Thompson; Mayers; O'Farrell)
Attendance	42,891
Referee	K. Howley (Middlesbrough)
Line-ups	**Chelsea:** Matthews; P. Sillett; J. Sillett; Nicholas; Mortimore; Scott; Brabrook; Greaves; Tindall; Brooks; Blunstone;
	PNE: Else; Cunningham; Walton; O'Farrell; Dunn; Smith; Mayers; Thompson; Finney; Sneddon; Taylor;

The opening game of a campaign which will forever be known as Tom Finney's last season, saw North End travel to Stamford Bridge to take on Chelsea. Conditions were phenomenal and as the game kicked-off, the temperature was 84 degrees in the shade!

As well as the heat, a dry pitch and a lively ball, North End had to contend with a Chelsea side some years younger on average.

Despite this, North End took the lead after 13 minutes when FINNEY started and finished a lovely move after Mayers had done the spadework. It didn't take long for the home side to draw level when Brabrook's cross was met on the volley by GREAVES, his shot beating Else at the near post.

Within minutes of drawing level, Chelsea had taken the lead and again it was Jimmy GREAVES. The 19-year-old inside-forward held off Cunningham before shooting into the far corner of the net past the advancing Else. On the half-hour mark, Finney was clean through on goal but was brought down as he attempted to go round the 'keeper. Unbelievably, the referee ignored North End's claims for a penalty when it seemed certain he would score. Thompson also came close to levelling the scores but his header which beat Matthews, landed on top of the Chelsea 'keeper's crossbar!

As it was, Chelsea extended their lead when Frank BLUNSTONE cut inside Cunningham and unleashed a powerful shot that beat the outstretched arms of Fred Else and hit the inside of the post before crossing the line.

Midway through the second-half, Chelsea went 4-1 up as GREAVES completed his hat-trick. The Blues' inside-forward outpaced the North End defence before casually lobbing Else from the edge of the box - a goal worthy of Alex James and Hughie Gallacher at their best!

Not to be outdone, Tommy THOMPSON showed he too could score spectacular goals. Fastening on to a Finney pass, he curled his shot round the Chelsea defence and past a bemused Matthews.

About ten minutes from time, North End manager Cliff Britton switched Finney to the wing with Mayers moving to centre-forward. After this, the Whites became more mobile, Finney's skill on the wing electrifying the side. He opened up the Chelsea defence with a devastating attack which Taylor rounded off with a shot which hit MAYERS on its way to the net. Then Finney bamboozled the Blues' defence again and after a succession of escapes, his lob found O'FARRELL who coolly slotted home the equaliser.

Unfortunately, with Chelsea now flagging in the heat, there was no time to restart play, otherwise North End might have gone on to win!

Preston North End v Chelsea

Saturday 19th December 1959

Greaves nets five in nine-goal thriller

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Chelsea 5**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thompson 3; Sneddon)
	Chelsea: ((Greaves 5)
Attendance	15,775
Referee	N. Hough (Macclesfield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Else; Cunningham; Walton; Milne; Richardson; Smith; Mayers; Thompson; Finney; Sneddon; Taylor;
	Chelsea: Matthews; Shellito; Sillett J; Mortimore; Scott; Nicholas; Brabrook; Graves; Bridges; Brooks; Blunstone;

When North End played Chelsea at Stamford Bridge on the opening day of the season, a crowd of 42,891 witnessed a 4-4 thriller, but due to the traditional pre-Christmas shopping and the murky weather just 15,775 spectators were treated to a feast which they thoroughly enjoyed and would long remember.

North End were top of the First Division whilst Chelsea had lost their last four league games.

Because of the gloom, the Deepdale floodlights were switched on from the outset. Play swung from end to end as both teams went in search of an early goal. Both defences seemed uncertain and so it came as no surprise when after 14 minutes Chelsea took the lead. Inside-forward Jimmy GREAVES just 19-years-old, broke through a static North End defence, before shooting past Fred Else. Within a minute, North End had drawn level when THOMPSON ghosted into a packed Chelsea goalmouth, to get his foot to a Finney cross and divert the ball past Reg Matthews.

North End steamed forward in search of a second goal and it came after 21 minutes. Thompson's pass found SNEDDON who though under pressure from a couple of Chelsea defenders and at an acute angle, managed to place his shot wide of Matthews in the Chelsea goal.

Chelsea's wingers Peter Brabrook and Frank Blunstone were causing the North End defence all sorts of problems and on the half-hour mark they combined to set up GREAVES for his and Chelsea's second goal. He went round both Walton and Else before slipping the ball into the unguarded net. Three minutes later, the youngster had completed his hat-trick and Chelsea led 3-2. GREAVES' third goal was down to his quick thinking, reacting before any of North End's defenders after Else had failed to hold Brabrook's shot.

North End fought back and both Thompson and Finney brought saves out of Matthews before the 'Preston Plumber' had a shot kicked off the line with Matthews beaten.

The second-half was only seven minutes old when Chelsea increased their lead. Blunstone's pin-point cross to the near post was met by GREAVES who headed the ball wide of Else's outstretched arms. On 64 minutes, GREAVES scored again, making it five for himself and five for Chelsea.

But as North End had demonstrated previously on a number of occasions during the early part of the season, they did do not curl up and die. THOMPSON reduced the arrears from close range and then completed his own hat-trick with a well placed header from a Finney cross.

During the nerve-tingling last few minutes, the crowd roared for another goal. North End to their credit, gave it their all, and so extend their unbeaten run to ten matches but Chelsea hung on to win this Christmas cracker.

Preston North End v Luton Town

Saturday 30th April 1960

The end of an era

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Luton Town 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Alston; Smith)
	Luton Town: (-)
Attendance	29,781
Referee	J. A. Hemmingway (Pontefract)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Else; Wilson; Walton; Fullam; Dunn; Smith; Finney; Milne; Alston; Sneddon; Taylor;
	Luton Town: Baynham; Dunne; Daniel; Morton; Kelly; Brown; Bingham; Turner; McBride; Cummins; Tracey;

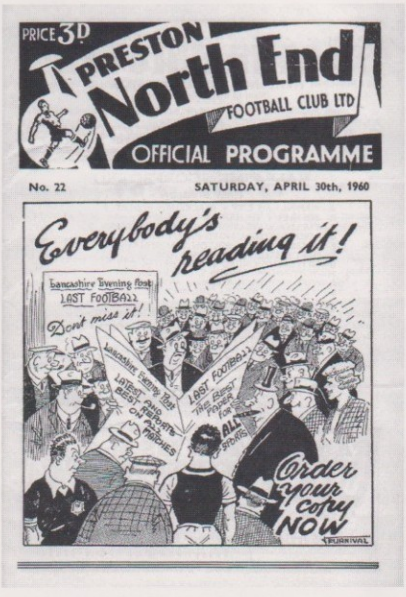
Tom Finney's career was at an end and over 15,000 spectators were inside Deepdale half-an-hour before kick-off, waiting to see their idol in action for the last time. Tom had been playing at centre-forward but for sentimental reasons, chose to play his last game in the position he started his career in August 1946, outside right.

Speaking before the game to the Evening Post's Walter Pilkington, Tom said that he was finding it hard to keep a stiff upper lip: ' I have been simply deluged with letters from all parts of the country, from friends, complete strangers, old colleagues, fellow players, football managers, among them my old team-mates Bill Shankly and Andy Beattie and various notabilities in the game.'

As the players walked out, they, led by Tom, were met by thunderous applause from all parts of the ground. The Brindle Prize band played 'For he's a jolly good fellow' and when the applause finally died down, the band played its final number 'Auld Lang Syne', when the players of both sides and match officials joined hands in the traditional fashion.

The game itself was a relaxed affair without any real play to arouse the enthusiasm of the crowd. Finney was trying as hard as anyone to create an opening but the Luton defence held firm. The best opportunity to break the deadlock came on the half-hour mark but Alston missed an open goal, after Smith had headed a through ball into his path. With only Baynham to beat, he hurried his shot, allowing the England 'keeper to pull off a fine save. North End's efforts were finally rewarded in the 34th minute when ALSTON made up for his earlier miss, nipping in to intercept Kelly's back-pass and shoot past Baynham.

The second-half was also lacklustre but the young Alston again justified his inclusion by delivering a deep cross to Finney. The maestro then squared the ball across the penalty area, Milne dummied it, and SMITH slammed it home.



Alston was now brimming with confidence but was denied a goalscoring opportunity by some good defending. Tom Finney hardly ever wasted a ball and carved out many an opportunity for his team-mates. Five minutes from time, Finney pounced onto a through ball from Sneddon and was only prevented from scoring by sheer weight of numbers.

At the final whistle, the fans chanted Finney's name, some spilling onto the pitch to be near their hero. A podium was quickly erected by the East Paddock as fans and players alike crowded round to hear him speak. Tom had a tear in his eye as he cleared his throat to speak.

'I hardly know what to say. It is such a sad, sad day for me. I would like to thank you all for the wonderful support I have enjoyed during my time here. Also for the many marvellous tributes paid to me in letters from all over England. I would like to thank the North End directors and my colleagues for making it such a wonderful time while I have been at Deepdale. It is sad, but today is a day I will remember forever and thank you all for making it so grand.'

A fitting end to a career so many had enjoyed; a speech as honest and reserved as the greatest player to take the field for Preston North End.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington wrote: 'A great, if sad occasion at Deepdale, though Finney's last game in first-class football was made all the more memorable by a home win and a performance to delight the connoisseur by the North End idol. After a quiet start due to the emotion he felt over his departure from the Deepdale scene, Tom Finney sparkled and created chance after chance for his willing and helpful colleagues. Finney in a brief but happily worded speech to a near 30,000 crowd, thanked followers for their support and said he would remember this occasion throughout his life.'

The official matchday programme also gave Tom a glowing send off. 'Tom Finney has graced the footballing scene in all parts of the world to the lasting credit of his club, his town and his nationality. Footballl universally identifies him for his true worth and the game is the poorer for his retirement. For us at Deepdale, the loss is emotionally personal in that we echo the affection and sentiments of every North End supporter. It is with deep regret that we must abide by his decision to retire after years of sterling service and unrivalled example both on and off the field. We wish to place on record our deep and abiding appreciation and heartfelt thanks for Tom Finney's invaluable contribution and devotion to the welfare of Preston North End Football Club.'

Sir Tom Finney addresses the throng after bringing down the curtain on his illustrious career. The faces of his team mates speak volumes. Without Finney North End were to be relegated from the top flight the following season.

They have yet to return.

Preston North End v Arsenal

Tuesday 30th August 1960

New boys shine to give North End season's first win

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Arsenal 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Spavin; Alston)
	Arsenal: (-)
Attendance	20,104
Referee	K. R. Tuck (Chesterfield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Else; R. Wilson; Walton; Wylie; Singleton; Smith; Alston; Sneddon; P. Thompson; Spavin; Mayers;
	Arsenal: Kelsey; Wills; McCulloch; Everett; Sneddon; Docherty; Skirton; Barnwell; Herd; Bloomfield; Henderson;

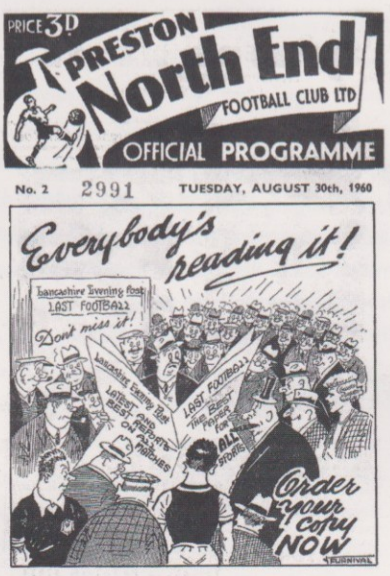
After losing their first three games of the season, North End made a number of dramatic changes, with youngsters Tony Singleton, Alan Spavin and Peter Thompson all coming in for their league debuts. Despite having little experience beyond playing in the previous season's FA Youth Cup matches, the news of much needed team changes spread round the town like wildfire and possibly put another 5,000 on the gate.

Both sides had escapes during the early stages of the first-half. North End were greatly relieved when John Barnwell hit the bar with a cross shot whilst at the other end, Sneddon's powerful drive beat Kelsey only for McCulloch to head off the line. Just before the interval, Tony Singleton's promising league baptism was cut short by a jab in the ribs from David Herd. It was severe enough to call for an X-Ray examination, resulting in him having to miss the whole of the second-half.

Despite being down to ten men, North End almost took the lead with the last kick of the first-half. Thompson played in Mayers and his well-struck shot looked to be heading for the top right-hand corner of Jack Kelsey's net until the Welsh international 'keeper flung himself full length to finger tip the ball to safety.

In Singleton's absence, Jimmy Smith took over at centre-half and played so well that most observers believed this to be his best position.

An Arsenal onslaught was solidly repelled at the start of the second half. After which North End took command. The Whites were so much on top that despite having a side packed with internationals, Arsenal were frequently outplayed. Their only real threat had come from Scottish international centre-forward David Herd but Smith's height and long stride blotted out the danger.



North End deservedly took the lead after 73 minutes when Kelsey, challenged by Thompson, fumbled a centre by Alston and SPAVIN was on hand to force the ball over the line for a debut goal. The youngster's unbounded delight was shared by his team-mates and the Deepdale crowd alike.

Inspired by Spavin's goal, ten-men North End struck again two minutes later, when following good approach play by Spavin and Thompson, ALSTON flicked the ball over the head of Kelsey.

Without doubt, the game's most stirring feature was North End's winning rally when misfortune had reduced the side to 10 men, whilst both Thompson and Spavin had the kind of league debut which youngsters dream about.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington writing in the Lancashire Evening Post wrote: 'After three successive defeats, Preston North End stormed back to something resembling the form expected of them and sent a 20,000 crowd home delighted with a fine performance. Deservedly they won the return engagement with Arsenal by 2-0 to gain their first points and disperse gloom which had settled over the local football fraternity like a storm cloud.'

Tony Singleton (left) and Jimmy Smith both became stalwarts of North End's backline during the early sixties. Surprisingly though for a defender, Singleton is best remembered for a goal - his stunning effort from the halfway line that beat Swansea in the 1964 FA Cup semi-final. Smith also scored some vital goals, netting 13 times for North End. Not bad for a left-back!

Preston North End v Peterborough United

Tuesday 11th October 1960

North End kick-off with win in new cup competition

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Peterborough United 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (P. Thompson 2; Sneddon; Walker og)
	Peterborough United: (Halls)
Attendance	12,958
Referee	K. A. Collinge (Altrincham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Else; Cunningham; O'Neill; Fullam; Singleton; Wylie; Alston; Sneddon; P. Thompson; Lambert; Taylor;
	Peterborough United: Anderson; Whittaker; Walker; Rayner; Rigby; Graham; Halls; Emery; Bly; Smith; McNamee;

Preston's first-ever match in the newly formed Football League Cup saw them entertain Fourth Division newcomers Peterborough United.

The visitors had the better of the early exchanges and both Bly and Emery came close to giving 'Posh; a shock lead. On 11 minutes, Alston was obstructed by Graham after outstripping Walker. Alston's free-kick was head-high to the goalkeeper but instead of catching it, he punched it out to THOMPSON who hit home a low shot. Good covering by Wylie prevented Emery from grabbing a quick equaliser but on 15 minutes, North End were gifted a second goal. Cunningham's quick thinking sent a cross-field pass to Taylor and he thumped a long ball down the middle. It went to Peterborough's WALKER who although on his own, pushed a back-pass wide of the advancing Anderson and into his own goal.

Anderson in the Peterborough goal was looking very jittery and with Whittaker and Walker struggling badly, the visitors had a long spell under pressure. During this period, they were lucky to get away with a penalty award when Rigby handled in trying to clear a badly bouncing ball.

Eventually 'Posh' hit back and Smith's excellent anticipation ran Cunningham into trouble and his pass to Else was intercepted. Smith's neat pass to McNamee led to a shot which severely tested the North End 'keeper and then a Bly cross hit Cunningham on the line and bounced just the wrong side of McNamee. The visitors reduced the arrears after 31 minutes when McNamee's cross was missed by O'Neill and HALLS nipped in to slam the ball into the roof of the net.

Shortly after the interval, Bly raced in to Halls' centre, Singleton tackled clumsily and a free-kick was awarded. Emery's effort was well saved by Else at the foot of his right-hand post. United almost drew level after 57 minutes when Graham crashed in a terrific shot from 30 yards. Else was nowhere near the ball as it hit the foot of the upright and bounced straight out again!

Within two minutes of that let-off, North End went further ahead. Taylor's lob had Anderson in trouble and the goalkeeper pushed the ball on to the bar, giving SNEDDON the easiest of chances. A minute later, Sneddon headed backwards from a Taylor cross and THOMPSON blasted in the best goal of the game.

McNamee almost put 'Posh; back in the fight soon afterwards but Else again saved the day for North End. In the game's dying moments, Halls centred hard, the ball bounced off Wylie's leg and Else had to change direction in order to save.

After beating Gillingham in the next round, North End went out to Aston Villa, the inaugural winners of the first Football League Cup.

Tottenham Hotspur v Preston North End

Saturday 1st April 1961

No win in last seven means the drop

Final Score	**Tottenham Hotspur 5 Preston North End 0**
Venue	White Hart Lane
Scorers	**Tottenham Hotspur:** (White, Jones 3, Saul) **PNE:** (-)
Attendance	46,325
Referee	M. A. Fussy (Retford)
Line-ups	**Tottenham Hotspur:** Brown; Baker; Henry; Blanchflower; Norman; Marchi; Jones; White; Saul; Allen; Medwin; **PNE:** Kelly; Cunningham; O'Neill; Wylie; Singleton; O'Farrell; Dagger; Fullam; Alston; Sneddon; Thompson;

This was the beginning of the end. After this heavy defeat, against the team who eventually ran away with the League Championship, North End would not win any of their further six league games, finishing bottom of the table. Little did they know this would be their last top flight game for over 40 years.

It was Easter Saturday and Spurs were going strong in both League and Cup, so it was always going to be a tough encounter. Both managers were forced to make changes following knocks suffered in recent games. Spurs were without Mackay, Smith and Dyson while North End had both Mayers and Else side-lined following an impressive Good Friday win at Maine Road.

Owing to a clash of colours, North End were in their change strip of royal blue as Spurs began to dominate the early proceedings. In fact, the home side took the lead after only three minutes due to a tragic blunder by stand-in 'keeper Alan Kelly who was playing in only his second league outing (North End lost the first 5-1 at Hillsborough). WHITE tried a speculative shot from fully 25 yards. He scuffed the ball and Kelly should have saved it comfortably; however he allowed the ball to squirm through his grasp onto the base of the post and into the net!

North End refused to allow this setback to shatter their nerves and Dagger should have equalised after Alston had played the ball in from the left wing. But with only Brown to beat, he somehow spooned the ball over the bar from the edge of the six-yard box.

On 20 minutes, Spurs doubled their lead when Allen beat Cunningham for pace before a quick interchange of passes involving three Spurs players. Finally JONES took possession of the ball, went past the lunging tackles of two North End defenders and slipped the ball past the advancing Kelly.

Five minutes later, Spurs went 3-0 up as Allen whipped over an inviting centre and SAUL powered a header past the hapless Kelly. Dagger had a chance to redeem his earlier miss but again he made a hash of his shot, shooting wide from eight yards after Alston had created an opening. In the final minute of the first-half, Spurs added a fourth with JONES finishing from close range after Blanchflower had lobbed a free-kick over the top of the North End defence. With four first-half goals, Spurs had taken their season's total to 102 in just 36 matches and they weren't finished for the afternoon yet.

Kelly was again beaten on 62 minutes when JONES completed his hat-trick with an over-head scissors kick. The Preston 'keeper denied Spurs further goals with fine saves from Jones and Allen, who also hit a post but this was the beginning of the end for the North End side, who in their first season without Tom Finney had struggled from day one.

Rotherham United v Preston North End

Saturday 28th October 1961

The Black Prince makes his bow

Final Score	**Rotherham United 2 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Millmoor
Scorers	**Rotherham United:** (Weston; Houghton) **PNE:** (Wilson; Dawson)
Attendance	10,069
Referee	J. S. Pickles (Cheshire)
Line-ups	**Rotherham United:** Morritt; Perry; Morgan; Lambert; Lancaster; Waterhouse; Wilson; Weston; Houghton; Kirkman; Taylor; **PNE:** Kelly; Cunningham; Ross; Wylie; Singleton; Barber; Alston; Wilson; Dawson; Sneddon; Thompson;

This game had a number of firsts for North End. It was the first time they had played at Millmoor with its impressive 146 feet high floodlights which were the apple of the directors and fans eyes. It was also Ken 'Spider' Waterhouse's first game against North End since leaving Deepdale.

It was also another first, the fist appearance of Alex Dawson, signed the day before from Manchester United.

Dawson had met up with his new team-mates in Huddersfield and the side had been reshuffled for his inclusion in the starting line-up.

Dawson started brightly, forcing Morritt in the Rotherham goal to come and pluck the ball off his feet after a surging run down the left wing. North End's new signing was always in the thick of the action, heading just wide from a Wilson cross and then having a snap shot turned away by Morritt. However, in the 16th minute, Rotherham took the lead against the run of play. Lambert, the Millers' right-half put over a deep cross and while the North End defence seemed to be looking for offside, WESTON smartly seized the opportunity to drive a shot high into the top right-hand corner of Kelly's goal. This encouraged the home side to come out of their shell and they became a much more dangerous proposition.

Dawson went close again on 25 minutes, forcing Morritt into his best save yet, with a fine header from Alston's cross but just after the half-hour mark, Rotherham grabbed a second. Taylor put over a dangerous cross and HOUGHTON sent a first-time volley whizzing past Kelly. Dawson thought he had pulled a goal back but he was adjudged to have handled the ball before firing low into the net from just inside the penalty area. Just seconds before the interval, the Millers almost scored a third, after Taylor, who had beaten Cunningham all ends up, smashed his shot against the crossbar with Kelly well beaten.

Within three minutes of the restart, North End were back in the game. Dawson began the move by finding Dave WILSON free on the left. The youngster hit a hard, low shot past Morritt, although the United 'keeper did manage to get a hand to the ball. Shortly afterwards, Dawson headed narrowly over from a Wylie cross before on 63 minutes, he finally got the debut goal he thoroughly deserved. Dave Wilson returned the earlier favour by nodding the ball forward to DAWSON on the run, who gathered it in his stride before hitting a right-footed shot out of Morritt's reach.

North End pushed forward in the hope of a winner and Morritt was very lucky when after failing to hold Alston's header, Wilson's follow-up shot hit his legs as he lay prone on the goal-line. In the dying minutes, Dawson found the side-netting but at the end of the game nobody was going to remember the chances he had missed.

Preston North End v Liverpool

Monday 26th February 1962

North End fighting spirit leaves Liverpool cold

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Liverpool 0**
Venue	Old Trafford
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thompson)
	Liverpool: (-)
Attendance	43,944
Referee	K. Howley (Middlesbrough)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Cunningham; Ross; Wylie; Singleton; Smith; Wilson; Biggs; Dawson; Spavin; Thompson;
	Liverpool: Slater; Byrne; Moran; Milne; Yeats; Leishman; Callaghan; Hunt; St John; Melia; A'Court;

Having disposed of non-League Weymouth, managed by Frank O'Farrell in round four, North End were drawn against Liverpool in the fifth round of the FA Cup. Preston held the Reds, who were running away with the Second Division title, to two goalless draws before the clubs met for a third time at Old Trafford.

The North End team coach broke down in the blizzard as the players made their way to a Manchester Hotel prior to the game. After finding a replacement, they were given a police escort to their destination! Conditions at Old Trafford would have tried a seasoned Arctic explorer - a snow covered pitch in which footholds were not easy and a chilling wind which forced the game to be played in a blinding snowstorm. North End had the winds at their backs in the first-half and it appeared that victory would go to the side who made the fullest use of it.

The only real incident of note in a hard-fought first-half came when the ball from one of Alan Kelly's goal kicks was blown into the Liverpool penalty area where it bounced over the head of the towering Ron Yeats before Slater held it just under the bar. When North End turned round at the interval they had failed to make good use of the wind and the Whites' supporters might have been excused for thinking that in the second-half, Liverpool might seize the initiative.

Against the wind, North End seized possession at every opportunity and their man-to-man passing bewitched Liverpool's defence which in the earlier meetings had never looked so ragged. After 265 minutes or ten minutes into the second-half, North End scored what proved to be the ties' only goal. Jim Smith' punt into the Liverpool area was indecisively headed away by Yeats. It dropped to Peter THOMPSON, the man who thought he was unfit to play but was persuaded to do so. He drove the ball and with the help of a slight deflection off Byrne beat Bert Slater in the Liverpool goal. Cunningham, who was a tower of strength in the North End defence, linked well with Spavin to provide an opening for Biggs, whose first-time shot rattled Slater's left-hand upright. Dawson missed a glorious opportunity to extend North End's lead when he headed wide from a Wilson cross.

Melia was less effective than in the previous meetings and with St John well and truly shackled by Singleton, the Reds failed to make much headway. Kelly, who had to receive treatment after diving at the feet of Roger Hunt, came to North End's rescue five minutes from the end, when he threw himself to his left to save a pile-driver from Hunt that was destined for the top corner of his goal.

The replay was unusual in that offside decisions were rare and memorable in that more than 136,000 had seen three games, each one so full of interest and excitement.

Manchester United v Preston North End

Wednesday 14th March 1962

Battling North End beaten by Cup crackerjacks!

Final Score	**Manchester United 2 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Old Trafford
Scorers	**Manchester United:** (Herd; Charlton)
	PNE: (Spavin)
Attendance	63,448
Referee	G. McCabe (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**Manchester United:** Gaskell; Dunne; Cantwell; Stiles; Foulkes; Setters; Quixall; Giles; Herd; Lawton; Charlton;
	PNE: Kelly; R. Wilson; Ross; Wylie; Singleton; Smith; D. Wilson; Biggs; Dawson; Spavin; Thompson;

Paired with mighty Manchester United in the sixth round of the FA Cup, Preston gave the Red Devils the surprise of their lives as they had much the better of a goalless draw at Deepdale.

North End's display in that first meeting led Matt Busby to tell his side 'Forget the name of Preston and the division they play in' for there is no doubt, United went into the first tie expecting it was going to be much easier than it turned out.

Though United had the better of the early exchanges, it was North End who took the lead against the run of play after 25 minutes. Wilson had forced Foulkes to head clear after a run to the by-line but the ball only found its way to SPAVIN whose shot from just inside the penalty area found its way into the bottom left-hand corner of Gaskell's net.

North End's Scottish international full-back, Willie Cunningham had been forced to miss the match through injury and his replacement Bob Wilson given the task of man-to-man marking Bobby Charlton. However, in the 28th minute, CHARLTON came inside Wilson, evaded Singleton's lunging tackle and hit a right-foot drive hard and low past Kelly. A minute later Ross had his name taken for an off-the-ball incident involving Quixall, the United man following him into the book early in the second-half.

On 35 minutes, Nobby Lawton bundled both Kelly and the ball into the net but the referee was on the spot and disallowed the future North End man's effort. A minute later, Lawton fouled Wylie, raced away, rounded Kelly and shot home. Again the referee rightly denied United from taking the lead. However, six minutes from half-time, HERD blasted United into the lead with as fine a goal as one could wish to see. Flicking the ball away from Singleton, the former Arsenal leader met the drop with such ferocity that a low shot whistled past Kelly before he had chance to move.

Eight minutes after the resumption, a quick throw-in by Dawson caught United's defence flat-footed. Alfie Biggs raced through and with only Gaskell to beat, he shot inches wide of the far post. North End were also unlucky not to be awarded a penalty just after the hour mark when Wilson was held down by Dunne right under the referee's nose. Thompson was denied a fine goal by a spectacular save by Gaskell and a powerfully-hit Wilson free-kick shaved the outside of Gaskell's right-hand post. Though Peter Thompson didn't see as much of the ball as in the first meeting, he nearly earned a second replay with a long, swirling dropping shot-cum-centre which Gaskell almost turned into his own net. Fortunately for the 'keeper, the line of the ball was outside the post. There were thrills to the end with Lawton missing a sitter and Charlton hitting the post.

Preston North End v Swansea Town

Saturday 20th April 1963

Dawson hat-trick caps fine comeback

Final Score	**Preston North End 6 Swansea Town 3**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Dawson 3; Smith; Lawton; Davies og)
	Swansea Town: (Morgan; Thomas 2)
Attendance	7,652
Referee	K. Howley (Middlesbrough)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Cunningham; Ross; Davidson; Singleton; Smith; Wilson; Thompson; Dawson; Lawton; Holden;
	Swansea Town: Dwyer; Evans; Griffiths; Davies; Johnson; Saunders; Jones; Thomas; Reynolds; Morgan; Todd;

North End were badly in need of the points when Swansea arrived at Deepdale, having not won any of their previous six matches and slipping perilously close to the relegation zone.

Swansea had never won at Deepdale on any of their six visits and they were met by one of the smallest crowds of the season after the spring sunshine turned into blustery showers shortly before the kick-off. Swansea; bad record at Deepdale was soon forgotten however when the Welsh club surprised North End inside the first minute. Cunningham's poor clearance was picked up by Reynolds who flicked it inside to Jones, who in turn let it run on for MORGAN. He was unmarked and hit a first time shot past Kelly with the defence nowhere to be seen.

North End did not let this setback unnerve them and were soon on level terms. Peter Thompson found DAWSON 12 yards from goal and he netted with a hard left foot shot that gave Dwyer in the Swansea goal no chance. The Whites continued to do the bulk of the attacking and Dawson headed straight at Dwyer from a Wilson cross before the North End winger crashed a shot against the 'keeper's knees. North End were now camped in their opponents' half, peppering the Kop End goal with crosses, shots and headers but on 31 minutes it was Swansea who scored the game's next goal.

Preston's defence were caught napping when a free-kick by Evans found THOMAS on the penalty spot and he slotted the ball past Kelly. The Republic of Ireland international 'keeper was rooted to the spot, probably in shock at the first time his goal had been under threat for half an hour!

North End could have levelled in the last minute of the first-half when Dawson beat Dwyer with a close range effort but Evans cleared off the line. Dawson ran at the Swans defence from the off in the second-half and shortly after the break was felled on the edge of the area. He took the free-kick himself but his goalbound shot was deflected behind by Davies. North End drew level in the 57th minute when Ross took a free-kick that was headed home by Jimmy SMITH. The cheers had not died away when North End took the lead, Wilson's cross hit the unfortunate DAVIES and he diverted it past Dwyer into his own net.

Preston were now on top and enjoying the game. Wilson's crosses could have resulted in numerous goals, Dawson the culprit on two occasions when he should have extended the lead. With 20 minutes of the game to go, LAWTON made it 4-2 with his first goal in a North End shirt, finishing off a fine move involving Thompson and Wilson. THOMAS pulled one back for the Welshmen but in the last five minutes, the Swans' defence came under constant pressure.

Alex DAWSON scored two more goals for his first North End hat-trick. The first was a header from a Dave Wilson cross, whilst another header in the final minute wrapped things up.

Southampton v Preston North End

Saturday 7th September 1963

Depleted North End win nine-goal thriller

Final Score	**Southampton 4 Preston North End 5**
Venue	The Dell
Scorers	**Southampton:** (Kirby 2; Burnside; O'Brien) **PNE:** (Lawton 2; Dawson 2; Kendall)
Attendance	15,925
Referee	H. Horner (Coventry)
Line-ups	**Southampton:** Reynolds; Williams; Traynor; Wimshurst; Knapp; Huxford; Paine; O'Brien; Kirby; Burnside; Sydenham; **PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Donnelly; Kendall; Singleton; Smith; Wilson; Lawton; Dawson; Barber; Holden;

In only the third game of a season that promised so much, yet ended in bitter disappointment, a makeshift North End side visited the Dell to play a Southampton side unbeaten at home in their last 21 matches.

There were chances at both ends in the opening minutes, Lawton's fierce shot being stopped on the line by Huxford whilst Alan Kelly saved a Burnside header at full stretch. For Preston it was a question of the players getting to know each other but gradually, some semblance of organisation was filtering through the North End ranks.

However, the best of the early chances fell to Southampton, Singleton taking the ball off the toes of Sydenham as he shaped to shoot and Wimshurst's first time shot scraping the bar. North End had a remarkable escape on the half-hour mark when first O'Brien and then Paine sent shots skidding across the face of the goal with Kelly beaten on both occasions. The North End 'keeper then tipped an overhead kick from O'Brien over the bar before Burnside sent a header bouncing along the top of the crossbar.

The Saints were beginning to get the upper hand and it was not too surprising when they took the lead in the 36h minute. Sydenham's corner was met by KIRBY whose header found its way through a crowd of players and past Alan Kelly.

Towards the end of the first-half, Wilson had a shot turned over the bar by Reynolds but on 41 minutes, they drew level when Dawson laid the ball back for LAWTON to fire home.

Early in the second-half, Burnside seemed certain to score but from just four yards out, he sliced his shot across the goal. Kelly, who had taken one or two knocks in the first-half was soon in the wars again when Kirby barged into him as the North End 'keeper went for a cross. After kicking the ball clear, he collapsed clutching his head and it was almost five minutes before he was able to resume following treatment. Kelly was called into action shortly afterwards, saving a Sydenham shot with his knees. The Saints' winger then beat Ross before lofting the ball in from the left. Kelly could only push the ball to the edge of the area where BURNSIDE slammed it in the net.

The Saints joy was short-lived, for two minutes later, a move involving Holden, Lawton and DAWSON ended with the latter netting with a hard, rising shot from the edge of the area.

There were just 12 minutes left when DAWSON gave North End the lead, however, the Saints bounced back and the troublesome KIRBY levelled things up from yet another corner. The game though was far from over and on 85 minutes, Howard KENDALL collected the ball in midfield and ran through a hesitant Southampton defence before tucking the ball under the advancing Reynolds. Yet again, the home side came back and with just three minutes remaining, equalised through O'BRIEN who was the quickest to react after Kirby's shot had thudded against the bar. Just when the Saints thought their unbeaten home record would remain intact, Nobby LAWTON drilled home what proved to be the winner as the referee put his whistle to his lips!

Preston North End v Bolton Wanderers

Monday 27th January 1964

Replay win sets up Carlisle cup date

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Bolton Wanderers 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Dawson; Lawton)
	Bolton Wanderers: (Edwards)
Attendance	38,290
Referee	D. A. Corbett (Wolverhampton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Davidson; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Wilson; Godfrey; Dawson; Spavin; Holden;
	Bolton Wanderers: Hopkinson; Hatton; Farrimond; Rimmer; Edwards; Lennard; Lee; Hill; Davies; Deakin; Taylor;

In the first meeting between the clubs, two goals by Peter Deakin inside five minutes equalised two earlier goals by Alex Dawson and earned First Division Bolton Wanderers a replay at Deepdale.

North End again proved themselves a more accomplished side than their loftier rivals but despite shooting at every opportunity in the early stages of the game, they were unable to beat Eddie Hopkinson in the Bolton goal. The England international 'keeper did well to keep out long range shots from Holden and Wilson while at the other end, Kelly saved a powerfully-struck shot from Lee and a 25-yarder from Freddie Hill which almost caught him unawares. Bolton's Wyn Davies was guilty of a miss from one of the few scoring chances he received, and shortly after North End took the lead.

Edwards, who was having an outstanding game at the heart of the Wanderers' defence, just failed in the tackle and DAWSON from Lawton's pass, broke free from him, somehow retained his balance and fired past Hopkinson to put the Whites ahead. It was a magnificent goal, comparable with his two headed goals in the first game at Burnden Park.

The Wanderers almost drew level within a couple of minutes of the opener when Hill's header from a Lee cross was brilliantly turned round the post by Kelly. The North End 'keeper was kept busy for the remaining quarter-of-an-hour of the first-half, making two more good saves from Lennard and Deakin. A pulsating fast fought half ended with a Wyn Davies header landing on the roof of the net with Kelly beaten.

North End started well in the second-half, but their shooting was poor with Dawson, Lawton, Spavin and Wilson all missing the target. The Whites were left to rue these missed chances when on 55 minutes, Bolton drew level. Taylor's left-wing corner found the unmarked EDWARDS and he beat Kelly at the near post with a perfectly judged header.

Bolton then stepped up a gear and came close to snatching the lead on a number of occasions, the best chance falling to Davies who was superbly tackled by Singleton as he shaped to shoot from close range.

There was just a quarter-of-an-hour to go when North End took the lead, courtesy of a somewhat scrambled goal. Holden cut inside Hatton and centred for Godfrey to pass on to Wilson. The winger's first time cross caused a melee to develop in which Lawton, Hatton and Hopkinson were mainly involved. It ended with LAWTON challenged simultaneously by Hatton and the goalkeeper, forcing the ball over the line from close range, whilst Hatton's brave attempts in trying to prevent the goal resulted in him needing attention.

North End clung on to their recovered lead as Bolton pressed hard in the closing stages for an equaliser. Wembley was only three games away!

Preston North End v Swansea Town

Saturday 14th March 1964

Singleton goal sends Swans spinning out as Whites reach Wembley

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Swansea Town 1**
Venue	Villa Park
Scorers	**PNE:** (Dawson, pen; Singleton) **Swansea Town:** (McLaughlin)
Attendance	68,000
Referee	J. E. Towers (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Donnelly; Lawton; Singleton; Davidson; Wilson; Ashworth; Dawson; Spavin; Holden; **Swansea Town:** Dwyer; Evans; Hughes; Johnson; Purcell; Williams; Jones; Draper; Thomas; Todd; McLaughlin;

Eleven months previously, Swansea 'keeper Noel Dwyer had picked the ball out of his net six times at Deepdale and although some amount of revenge had been exacted with a 5-1 win at the Vetch Field in December, there were still a few scores to be settled in this most important of matches.

The game ensured there would be a Second Division team in the Cup Final for the first time since 1949. Between the two sides, they had knocked out five First Division teams so they certainly both deserved to be at Villa Park.

The pitch looked in a sorry state with pools of water everywhere. Both sides came out in the pelting rain in their changed kits, North End in royal blue shirts and the Welshmen in orange. The Swansea fans had placed an imitation swan on the centre circle but this was removed by a smiling policeman!

As the game got underway, the pitch was already a quagmire in certain areas. The first real threat came from Swansea, as Todd showed a clean pair of heels to Lawton but somehow the North End player managed to get back and a yard outside the area, got in a tackle that sent Todd sprawling full length in the mud. The referee, who wasn't up with play, awarded a free-kick from which Williams' shot went through the wall and narrowly wide.

North End forced their way back into the game and Dwyer saved well from Dawson and Spavin. Preston were nearly caught out when John Donnelly missed a long cross-field pass and Jones was able to pull clear and deliver a centre for Thomas. The forward's glancing header beat Kelly but luckily for North End the ball grazed the outside of his right-hand post. North End's defence were coming unstuck at times trying to play their passing game, with the ball getting stuck on the sticky surface. It was a fairly even game with excitement at both ends. Kelly just managed to get his fingertips to a Draper header and a fierce drive from Ashworth rebounded off a Welsh defender for a corner.

Although Preston were the better footballing side, Swansea were matching the Whites for grit and determination and just before the interval, the Welsh side took the lead. Evans began the move by slamming the ball to Draper, who then squared the ball inside to Thomas. He evaded a challenge from Ross, before finding McLAUGHLIN who hit a hard low shot past Kelly.

In the second-half, North End attacked the Holte End and within seven minutes of the restart, they were level when the referee awarded a penalty. Alex Dawson ran on to a lobbed pass from Lawton and was shaping to shoot when Purcell took his legs from under him. DAWSON, who had missed his previous penalty at Derby, was composure personified as

he sent Dwyer the wrong way for his 33rd goal of the season.

North End now had the bit between the teeth and both Ashworth and Wilson were only inches away from giving the Whites the lead. Playing with great confidence, North End went 2-1 up in the 71st minute when Tony SINGLETON almost 40 yards from goal, let fly with a thunderbolt. The ball sailed through the air and straight past a bemused Noel Dwyer.

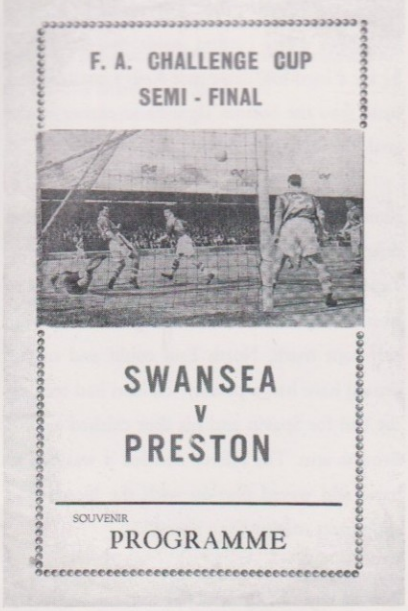
Singleton could have gone from hero to villain for with just a few minutes to play, he conceded a free-kick ten yards outside the area. The original effort was headed away by Dawson, but was returned into the box where Kelly punched clear off the head of Todd.

At the final whistle, the muddy heroes were greeted with a thunderous reception from the North End fans who could now prepare for their first trip to Wembley for ten years.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington using his Sports Editor title in the Evening Post had spoken to Tony Singleton prior to the game: 'On the way down this morning, Singleton remarked to me that North End must win. This was an opportunity every man in the side felt had to be taken and he, for one, had to be at Wembley.'

Alex Dawson was a prolific goalscorer getting 114 goals in 197 games for North End. This included his vital goal against Swansea that helped the Whites reach Wembley. He was also to score 1 of North End's 2 goals in the final which they lost 3-2 to West Ham.



One of the fine programmes in the Preston North End Collection housed at the National Football Museum, Deepdale.

Preston North End v West Ham United

Saturday 2nd May 1964

Injury-time winner ends North End dreams

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 West Ham United 3**
Venue	Wembley
Scorers	**PNE:** (Holden; Dawson) **West Ham United:** (Sissons; Hurst; Boyce)
Attendance	100,000
Referee	A. Holland (Barnsley)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Smith; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Wilson; Ashworth; Dawson; Spavin; Holden; **West Ham United:** Standen; Bond; Birkett; Bovington; Brown; Moore; Brabrook; Boyce; Byrne; Hurst; Sissons;

The League season was over with North End finishing a creditable third in Division Two, although that was not enough to win them promotion back to the top flight. They hoped to end the season on a high by returning to Lancashire with the FA Cup.

North End were seen as the real underdogs. The bookies and the newspapers had written off Preston and according to the Lancashire Evening Post, even the local policemen had written off North End in their seventh FA Cup Final - it was, they were reminded, 33 years since a Second Division side had won the FA Cup.

North End arrived at Wembley from their Weybridge headquarters, full of high spirits and were certainly not going to roll over and let West Ham walk away with the Cup. Jimmy Milne and Ron Greenwood led out their teams and they were introduced to the Earl of Harewood who was accompanied by Joe Mears, President of the FA.

The Whites included Howard Kendall, then the youngest player ever to play in an FA Cup Final, taking the record off former Arsenal and England winger Cliff Bastin who was there to witness his record being broken.

Early in the game, Spavin showed his ability, tricking his way past a couple of defenders before whipping a cross into the box which Bobby Moore had to thump clear, high into the grey London skies. A delightful flick from Howard Kendall found Lawton who played the ball through to Alex Dawson but Standen dived at the forward's feet to gather. At the other end, a low Sissons cross evaded the North End defence and Alan Kelly but Kendall got in a timely interception when it looked like Geoff Hurst was favourite to get the ball. North End took the lead after 10 minutes when after a surging run, Lawton found Dawson. Standen could only parry his shot and Doug HOLDEN following up, turned the ball over the line.

West Ham equalised within a minute with a fine solo goal from the 18-year-old Johnny SISSONS. After cutting inside two defenders, he hit a hard low drive past Kelly's outstretched hand into the bottom right-hand corner of the goal.

Kendall was having an outstanding game and delighted the crowd with his play, nearly scoring a spectacular goal after twice selling a dummy to Ronnie Boyce before unleashing a shot. On the half-hour mark, North End could and maybe should have had a penalty. Holden had teed up the ball for Spavin and his shot crashed against Brown's arm. The referee decided it was ball to hand and waved play-on with the North End supporters roaring for a spot-kick.

Preston regained the lead five minutes before the interval. Standen slipped as he came out for a corner, leaving DAWSON unmarked to head

home. This was Dawson's sixth goal of the cup campaign and his 36th of an excellent season.

Bobby Moore, the Footballer of the Year had been so ineffectual that Ron Greenwood was forced to change his tactics to counter the threat posed by Kendall and Lawton. The Hammers began to get a grip in midfield and on 52 minutes, they drew level through Geoff HURST. His header hit the bar and Alan Kelly managed to get a hand to the rebound. The ball dropped behind Kelly and as he turned, it trickled agonisingly slowly over the line.

Kelly then saved a Sissons piledriver whilst at the other end, Standen dived bravely at the feet of Alex Dawson. Chances came and went in the final quarter of the game and all thoughts were turning to extra-time. The referee was examining his watch when Hurst made one last surging run before slipping the ball to Brabrook. His cross sailed over the North End defence and Ron BOYCE sneaked in unmarked on the blind side to head the winner.

It was a heartbreaking finish for North End, whose cultured play made a mockery of their underdogs label. Their contribution to the match had been so great that the game was hailed by the press as being almost as exciting as the famous Matthews Cup Final.

What the papers said:

John Taylor for the Lancashire Evening Post always thought North End were up against it, he wrote: 'As if it were an omen, it was recalled by one paper that goalkeeper Alan Kelly was beaten five times against England in playing for Eire on his first visit to Wembley seven years ago.' The paper reported the tale of one fan who forgot his ticket: 'One North End fan had a shock when he arrived at Wembley. Mr Tassiker of Margaret Road, Penwortham had locked his 25s ticket safely away in a tin box at home and forgot to take it with him ! But the Wembley staff and Lancashire County Police came to his rescue. After a phone call to Penwortham, an officer went to Mr Tassiker's home, collected the ticket and passed on the details. Mr Tassiker, breathing again, went through the turnstile. Perhaps at the end he wished he hadn't bothered!

Bobby Moore plays deep in the defence of West Ham, an unaccustomed position, though needed to repel North End's attack.

Newcastle United v Preston North End

Saturday 26th September 1964

Wonder goal by Wilson no consolation after heavy defeat

Final Score	**Newcastle United 5 Preston North End 2**
Venue	St James Park
Scorers	**Newcastle United:** (Hilley; Cummings; McGarry; Kendall og; Taylor) **PNE:** (Lee; Wilson)
Attendance	34,219
Referee	P. Rhodes (York)
Line-ups	**Newcastle United:** Marshall; McKinney; Clark; Anderson; McGrath; lley; Hockey; Hilley; Cummings; McGarry; Taylor; **PNE:** Barton; Donnelly; Smith; Lawton; Wearmouth; Kendall; Hannigan; Wilson; Godfrey; Spavin; Lee;

North End had started the season off in rather sluggish fashion, some saying it was a hangover from the FA Cup Final defeat and after a midweek loss to Doncaster Rovers in the second round of the League Cup, they travelled to high-flying Newcastle United.

North End were without a number of first team regulars including Alan Kelly, Tony Singleton and Alex Dawson. Mick Wearmouth who later went on to become the club secretary, made his league debut.

Barton was soon busy, having to make two fine saves in less than thirty seconds, the first from Cummings and the second from Hockey. The home side took the lead after eight minutes when HILLEY was given the time to shoot past an unsighted Barton, though there was little power in his effort. Newcastle should have extended their lead in their next attack but Cummings' close range header flashed over the bar.

North End's best chances were counter-attacks and on one particular occasion, Brian Godfrey managed to shake off the attentions of McGrath, only to shoot wide of Marshall's goal. Another break saw Spavin and Godfrey play a nice one-two with a Godfrey shot hitting McGrath on the hand but it was an accident and there were no claims for a penalty. Godfrey thought he had equalised when he cleverly rounded McGrath and McKinney but his goalbound shot was deflected for a corner. It was now all Preston and after Spavin and Lee had gone close, the Whites drew level. Frank LEE took a corner and the ball went straight through Marshall's hands and into the net. On 40 minutes, the Magpies were back in the lead, Taylor picking up a loose ball ran on unchallenged before crossing for CUMMINGS who completely unmarked, headed past Barton from close range.

North End responded immediately and were back on level terms within sixty seconds, with a goal of outstanding quality by Dave WILSON. Receiving the ball 35 yards from goal, he took a first-time shot with his right foot. Marshall knew nothing about it until he picked it out of the back of the net and the home supporters described it as one of the best goals they had ever seen at St James Park.

North End started the second-half quite brightly with Godfrey ballooning a good chance over the bar. Newcastle came away and Taylor replied with a powerful effort which Barton turned round the post. The resulting corner fell to McGARRY and he headed home from three yards out. Unfortunately for North End, an own goal then extended the Magpies' lead, Howard KENDALL turning a harmless cross past Barton in the 54th minute. Newcastle added a late fifth through TAYLOR. North End were not to win again until the end of October.

Preston North End v Bolton Wanderers

Monday 14th February 1966

Wanderers are made to pay the penalty

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Bolton Wanderers 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Godfrey 2 pens; Dawson)
	Bolton Wanderers: (Lee; Davies)
Attendance	31,579
Referee	D. A. Corbett (Wolverhampton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Barton; Ross; Smith; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Hannigan; Godfrey; Dawson; Spavin; Wilson;
	Bolton Wanderers: Hopkinson; Hartle; Farrimond; Rimmer; Napier; Hatton; Lee; Bromley; Davies; Hill; Taylor;

In the knowledge that a home draw against First Division Tottenham Hotspur awaited the winners, this FA Cup fourth round replay between North End and Bolton Wanderers was certain to be a battle royal.

The opening exchanges were fairly physical as both sides sought to gain the upper hand. Neither goalkeeper had had much to do but in the 12th minute, Bolton's Eddie Hopkinson was picking the ball out of the back of his net. Godfrey found Hannigan with a delightful headed pass and the winger outpaced Farrimond before delivering a telling cross. The ball swerved past John Napier, Bolton's Northern Ireland international centre-half, Alex DAWSON, who had scored North End's goal in the first game, dived headlong to send the ball past Hopkinson.

Dawson was tireless and strong and midway through the first-half he almost extended North End's lead but his powerfully-struck shot from the edge of the area was well saved by the Bolton 'keeper.

As the first-half wore on, the visitors came back into the game more and Lee should have put them level but with only Barton to beat, he shot straight at the 'keeper. The Bolton winger made amends in the 38th minute when Taylor's corner kick was headed across the face of goal by Hatton and LEE unmarked in front of goal put the Wanderers level. North End ended the first-half with ten men, Alan Spavin being led off in agony following a ruthless tackle by Hartle.

He returned for the start of the second-half but within two minutes of the restart, Bolton had taken the lead. North End 'keeper John Barton could only parry a cross shot from Wyn Davies which had more force behind it than was apparent and after saving momentarily, lost the ball. It was long enough for DAVIES to come behind the retreating Barton and shoot into the open goal.

Three minutes later, Davies handled a Smith free-kick which the Bolton 'keeper Hopkinson appeared to have covered and the referee had no alternative but to award North End a penalty. GODFREY calmly drove hard and accurately into the top right-hand corner, beyond Hopkinson's reach. As if one penalty wasn't enough, Bolton conceded another on 68 minutes when Hannigan skipped past Farrimond and was shaping to shoot when he was scythed down by Hartle. GODFREY almost nonchalantly drove a hard rising shot into the roof of the net, leaving Hopkinson as completely beaten by this effort as by the first.

Thus the match was won and lost and the outcome was as much poetic justice for North End as poetic retribution for Bolton who had courted all sorts of risks in man-or-ball defensive tactics at the cost of numerous free-kicks.

Preston North End v Manchester United

Saturday 26th March 1966

International stars held by bold Preston

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Manchester United 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Dawson)
	Manchester United: (Herd)
Attendance	37,876
Referee	J. Finney (Hereford)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Smith; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Hannigan; Godfrey; Dawson; Spavin; Lee;
	Manchester United: Gregg; Brennan; Dunne; Crerand; Foulkes; Stiles; Best; Law; Charlton; Herd; Connelly;

Having defeated First Division Tottenham Hotspur in the fifth round of the FA Cup, North End were rewarded with a home quarter-final tie against League Champions Manchester United - who had a team full of international stars.

Nobby Lawton had recovered from the thigh strain that forced him off against Palace the week before but if he suffered the injury again that afternoon, he would not be able to go off, as the new substitute rule, introduced at the beginning of the season, was not applicable yet in the FA Cup.

Just minutes before the kick-off, a wall collapsed at the Kop End, injuring a number of people and the game was delayed for seven minutes.

United as would have been expected, had the better of the opening period of play. Heavy rain which had been falling for most of the day, stopping about an hour before kick-off, began to fall once more as North End began to fight back. Alex Dawson against his former club, sent a shot crashing against Gregg's body and then headed a corner against the foot of the post with the Northern Ireland 'keeper beaten.

United were a different class to the teams North End were facing week in week out, with Bobby Charlton, Denis Law and George Best just three of the players looking to break down a resolute Preston defence. After 13 minutes North End had an amazing let-off. Best found himself completely unmarked from a Law through ball but Kelly was quickly out and the winger could only shoot against the North End 'keeper's legs.

North End to their credit, fought with abundant spirit and considerable ability against their much vaunted opponents and they were coping well under pressure. But with United having two-thirds of the possession, they were pressed back for most of the first-half. North End should have taken the lead on the half-hour mark. Spavin floated over a dangerous cross, Dawson missed it but the ball fell to Hannigan. Unfortunately for Preston, the ball got stuck under his feet and by the time he got contact on it, Gregg was able to get back and push the ball to safety. Five minutes before the interval, North End took the lead, much to the surprise and joy of the home crowd. In unlikely fashion, United left big gaps in their defence and after Spavin had beaten Foulkes to the ball, he pulled it back to DAWSON to guide past Gregg. The Preston striker had maintained his cup record of having scored in every game.

However, within three minutes of the restart, United were level, Best slipping the ball to HERD who gave Kelly no chance from close range. Five minutes later another Best-made 'goal' was disallowed after he weaved his way into the area and fed Herd who was fractionally offside. Charlton created chances for Brennan and Law whilst Best continued to be the most exciting player on the pitch, constantly involved in United's best moves. However, on 75 minutes, the mercurial Irishman was forced off with a

knee injury and United were left to play with ten men. Kelly then made a breathtaking save from a Law header and though Best returned for the final few minutes, the game ended all-square.

In the replay at Old Trafford four days later, United won 3-1 but for those Preston fans who had been to the games, they were ones they would never forget. North End's season fell in a heap after this Cup defeat and they only won two of their final ten league games.

What the papers said:

Walter Pilkington looked back in the Football Special on a memorable day, he wrote:'North End expected a tough struggle with powerful Manchester United and it was duly forthcoming in a game fraught with tension and excitement from start to finish. The sensations also began with the collapse of a wall on the Spion Kop with injuries to numerous people who fell down with it. So manfully did Preston tackle their hard task that in spite of United's ascendancy for long spells of the first-half, the Preston side were ahead at half-time by a goal a little earlier by Dawson. All circumstances considered this shock for all who had predicted an easy passage to the semi-final for United, was a great performance and duly acclaimed as such by the joyful Preston supporters. As events decided that joy was short-lived, Manchester regained the initiative and quickly turned it to their advantage when Herd scored a Best inspired equaliser in the 48th minute. Preston gallantly as they struggled against a team playing with the cohesion expected of them, were hard pressed for a spell.'

Bobby Charlton was just one of the many stars on show in this match. Though North End fans will hold fond memories of his association with the club, who he eventually went on to play for and manage.

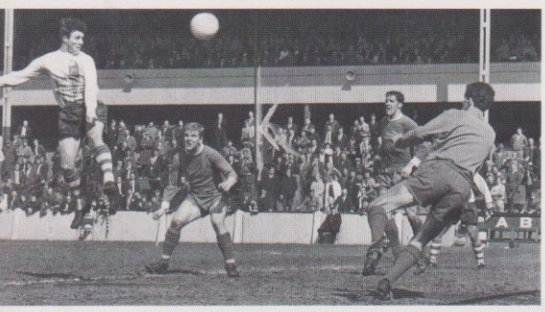
Preston North End v Cardiff City

Saturday 7th May 1966

Records tumble in last day rout

Final Score	**Preston North End 9 Cardiff City 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Godfrey 3, 1 pen; Hannigan 3; Greenhalgh 2; Lawton)
	Cardiff City: (-)
Attendance	10,018
Referee	H. P. Hackney (Barnsley)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; Smith; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Hannigan; Godfrey; Greenhalgh; Spavin; Lee; sub Ashworth;
	Cardiff City: John; Coldrick; Ferguson; Carver; Murray; Hole; Farrell; Summerhayes; Andrews; King; Lewis; sub Houston;

After a very average season, a crowd of just over 10,000 turned up at Deepdale for the final league game of the season against Cardiff City, another team who had struggled at the wrong end of the Second Division. Only a few weeks earlier it looked like the game was going to decisive for both sides but the Welsh club had won an eight-goal thriller over Middlesbrough the previous Tuesday and North End had done enough to move clear of the relegation zone, so both teams were able to come into the game with the pressure off.



Hannigan slots home the fifth goal on the stroke of half-time.

The pitch was a credit to the retiring groundsman Bob Naylor, who was coming to the end of twenty years service to the club.

The game started off quietly, giving no indication of the excitement that was to come, although most of the early probing came from North End. Their assertiveness came to fruition after 10 minutes when Nobby Lawton picked out Ernie HANNIGAN with a great ball. The sturdy winger who had scored North End's last four goals let fly with a cross-cum-shot which rose past John and into the top corner of the net.

Midway through the first-half, North End went 2-0 up. Brian Greenhalgh's shot was blocked in the area and the ball spun out to Nobby Lawton who headed goalwards. John managed to parry the ball but it fell into the path of LAWTON who was following up and forced the ball over the line.

This opened the floodgates for wave after wave of attacks, North End eventually extending their lead in the 28th minute. Godfrey flicked on Lee's corner and GREENHALGH was on hand to net from close range.

Cardiff did have the ball in the net on the half-hour mark but Farrell's drive was disallowed for offside.

Greenhalgh should have added a fourth in the 37th minute but with only John to beat, his low shot went the wrong side of the post. The home crowd didn't have too long to wait for the next goal for three minutes later, North End went 4-0 ahead. John could only parry Godfrey's

viciously struck free-kick and HANNIGAN slotted home the rebound. The crowd, ironically the lowest of the season, saw North End score a fifth goal on the stroke of half-time. Godfrey picked out HANNIGAN and he wasn't going to spurn the opportunity for a first-half hat-trick, heading past a helpless John.

North End maintained their supremacy in the second-half but a little over-confidence crept in and chances were missed. First Frank Lee hesitated when put through by Lawton, Carver having time to recover and Kendall shot wildly over the bar when completely unmarked. Finally, Greenhalgh was guilty of fluffing an effort from close range after John had been unable to hold Lawton's shot.

The White's sixth goal came from the penalty spot when Lee was brought down. GODFREY, who had been creator for most of the afternoon, sent John the wrong way. Two minutes later, GODFREY, now with a taste for goals, netted North End's seventh. GODFREY completed his hat-trick in the space of just four minutes when taking the ball from Spavin, he drew the 'keeper before sliding it by him to make it 8-0. With eight minutes to go, GREENHALGH scored North End's ninth goal to give the club its highest league win of the twentieth century.

In the end, the performance belied Preston's season as relegation scrappers who only got out of it in the last few games of the campaign and it gave hope, even if that proved false hope, that the next season would bring a return back to the top flight.

What the papers said:

This onslaught and demolition brought back memories of previous games and halcyon days at Deepdale to Walter Pilkington. He wrote: ' Now I recall that in 1954-55, North End beat Cardiff at Deepdale 7-1 and at Ninian Park in the same season 5-2. These records were knocked sideways with Godfrey equalling the Preston score against Birmingham at Deepdale when Tom Finney was in his prime. It is a remarkable crop of goals post-war that matches between Preston and Cardiff have produced.'

The rout continues as John in the Cardiff net sees another shot whistle past on its way to the back of the net.

Despite heroics from the Cardiff number 3 who desperately tried a goal line clearance, Greenhalgh heads home North End's third.

Bury v Preston North End

Tuesday 27th December 1966

A Christmas Cracker!

Final Score	**Bury 3 Preston North End 4**
Venue	Gigg Lane
Scorers	**Bury:** (Aimson 3)
	PNE: (Smith; Dawson; Lee; Ross)
Attendance	11,267
Referee	J. Thacker (Scarborough)
Line-ups	**Bury:** Ramsbottom; Leech; Eastham; Turner; Colquhoun; Lindsay; Lowes; Jones; Aimson; Parry; Claxton; sub Owen
	PNE: Kelly; Ross; Smith; Lawton; Singleton; Kendall; Hannigan; Lyall; Dawson; Spavin; Lee; sub; Crossley

Having finally broken their away duck in the previous outing at Northampton, beating the Cobblers 5-1, North End travelled the short distance to Gigg Lane to take on local rivals Bury.

After a bright start in which both teams missed goalscoring opportunities, the Shakers took the lead on 19 minutes when a harmless looking lofted cross from Lowes caused panic in the North End defence. Kelly and Smith went for the ball but to everyone's amazement, the pair fell over each other and Paul AIMSON shot into the empty net. The home side came close to extending their lead a quarter-of-an-hour later when Jones' shot beat Kelly, only for George Ross to clear off the line.

North End had come close to drawing level on a number of occasions and it was no more than they deserved when they equalised after 37 minutes. Frank Lee took a free-kick on the left and Jimmy SMITH rose high to head into the top left-hand corner of Neil Ramsbottom's goal. It was the North End defenders second goal in as many matches, having scored in the 2-2 home draw against the Shakers on Christmas Eve.

Five minutes into the second-half, Lee raced on to a pass from Alan Spavin and crossed to the far post where DAWSON headed home off the underside of the crossbar.

On 57 minutes, Bury were level. Lowes left three North End players standing in a burst of speed down the right-wing before finding AIMSON with a pin-point cross. The Bury striker completed a great move by chesting the ball down and firing past Kelly in the same movement.

North End then piled on he pressure and Ramsbottom produced a brilliant save to foil Spavin. Dawson and Lawton also went close before LEE scored a superb solo goal after 71 minutes. The North End winger jinked past Colquhoun and Leech and cut in before shooting hard past Ramsbottom into the bottom right-hand corner. The ball appeared to take a deflection off Leech and the Bury 'keeper was certainly going the wrong way when the ball entered the net!

Five minutes from time, Ramsbottom was beaten again as George ROSS shot home from fully 25 yards to give North End a seemingly unassailable 4-2 lead. But the issue was in doubt right up to the end and with just three minutes remaining, Smith felled Lowes and AIMSON completed his hat-trick from the penalty spot.

Then in the time remaining, Bury had four corners and two free-kicks and it was only a timely goal-line clearance by Kendall that saved the day for North End.

What the papers said:

Michael Dryland writing in the Evening Post wrote 'Ninety minutes of non-stop endeavour gave Preston North End their second away win of the season when they beat Bury 4-3 in a scintillating thrill-packed game at Gigg Lane last night. Nine goals in the last two away matches - compared with a mere six in the previous ten is proof of North End's new attitude to away games. Last night they sent their fans wild with delight with their industry, enthusiasm and obvious thirst for goals.'

Lynch pins of the North End defence, Alan Kelly, (left) and George Ross both played 40 League games in 1966-67 including this Christmas treat at Gigg Lane. George Ross was on the score sheet for the only time that season.

Preston North End v Blackpool

Monday 13th April 1970

Relegated and humiliated - against Blackpool!

Final Score	**Preston North End 0 Blackpool 3**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (-) **Blackpool:** (Pickering 3)
Attendance	35,400
Referee	D. Lyden (Birmingham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Patrick; McNab; Hawkins; Cranston; Heppolette; Lee (Irvine); Spavin; Lloyd; Gemmill; Temple **Blackpool:** Thomson; Armfield; Bentley; McPhee; James; Hatton; Burns; Craven; Pickering; Suddick; Hutchison; sub Mowbray

Memorable, yes, but for all the wrong reasons. This isn't a match report saying how badly North End played, the chances they missed etc (because there weren't any!) In fact, here's a quick run down of the goals, all scored by Blackpool's Fred Pickering.

After 16 minutes, a right-wing cross from Mickey Burns, unwanted by North End as a trainee, was met by PICKERING on the far post. A simple nod in gave Blackpool a 1-0 lead. On 40 minutes, the Seasiders were 2-0 up as Hutchison put a superb ball through to the overlapping Bill Bentley, who in turn crossed perfectly for PICKERING to ram home with his head. After 58 minutes, Fred Pickering scored his and Blackpool's third goal. A shot from Tommy Hutchison rebounded off the legs of Kelly and there was PICKERING to simply tap into the net.

The Seasiders had many more chances but in a North End book, it is not worth examining why they missed them and why they were by far the better team. It is much better to look at the occasion and what the outcome was at the end of one of the most horrific nights in the club's history.

Norman Shakeshaft in the Lancashire Evening Post described it as 'the agony and the ecstasy' and that just about sums it up. Over 35,000 packed into Deepdale in a season where the average was a little over 13,000. This was swelled by approximately 15,000 who had made the short journey from the Fylde, most coming down Blackpool Road (this was before the M55 was open). The Seasiders could win promotion to the First Division if they won the game and North End would be left hanging by a thread at the bottom of the table and as the night progressed, that was the only likely outcome in a one-sided encounter.

At the end of the game when the pitch was invaded by joyous fans, it brought back memories of the Finney era, however, it was not the Preston fans who were enjoying the occasion but the Blackpool fans chanting and singing, the sounds of which cut into the heart of any North End fan in the ground.

North End fans were left to chant for the head of manager Bobby Seith, who would not be in charge for the start of the club's first-ever season outside the top two divisions of the Football League, a dark day in Preston's distinguished footballing heritage.

The following day as Blackpool Chairman William Cartmell promised his club would set their sights on the European Cup, North End fans were contemplating their first-ever visits to places like Spotland and The Shay. As Jimmy Armfield, the final Blackpool player to leave the pitch, headed for the tunnel, the reality of what would undoubtedly be relegation began to sink in - even though mathematics meant they would have to wait 24 hours for other results - and fans trooped home in despair but it only took a year to bring a smile back to those faces.

Despair for Kelly -- delight for Pickering.

What the papers said:

Mike Dryland writing in the Evening Post was very uncompromising in his comments the following day. 'The harsh results of modern day soccer finally caught up with and indeed overtook Preston North End last night. As one who has avidly followed the fortunes of this once-proud club for many years, I am afraid that like any others, I found those 90 humiliating minutes almost too much to bear. Blackpool I know won promotion ...convincingly, deservedly. The jubilation of their supporters and players was understandable; the ecstatic scenes at the final whistle were impressive, emotional. Somehow though they seemed so far removed from all that is currently Deepdale. Utterly alien.

For Preston followers, Deepdale was no place for rejoicing, it as not been a place for rejoicing for several years. I am sure too Blackpool if they had been given the choice, would have selected any other ground in the land on which to achieve this final triumph. But the fates do not discriminate; the sickening reality of last night should stay embedded forever in the minds of all connected with Deepdale. As Blackpool passed into the Promised Land, North End were left I the wilderness. I just feel for the thousands who hold Preston dear ...those who will try to forget last night. But I fear no-one ever will and if the future is to hold brighter things for North End, no-one ever should!'

Pickering takes on the role of undertaker as he hammers another nail in North End's relegation coffin.

Fulham v Preston North End

Saturday 1st May 1971

A Happy day for North End!

Final Score	**Fulham 0 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Craven Cottage
Scorers	**Fulham:** (-)
	PNE: (Heppolette)
Attendance	25,774
Referee	W. J. Gow (Swansea)
Line-ups	**Fulham:** Webster; Pentecost; Callaghan; Horne; Matthewson; Dunne; Conway; Johnston (Halom) Earle; B. Lloyd; Barrett;
	PNE: Kelly; Ross; McNab; Bird; Hawkins; Spavin; Heppolette; Ham; N.Lloyd; Spark; Clark; sub; Wilson;

North End travelled to Fulham, knowing that anything other than a win would give the Cottagers the Third Division Championship but the Whites wanted to get back into the big time in style and would give it everything they had got.

The Match of the Day cameras were at Craven Cottage to witness the biggest game of the season for both clubs. Alan Ball senior had taken the managerial job at the beginning of the season and had done a tremendous job lifting the club and their supporters after the despair of relegation the previous season.

Both teams were given a rousing reception when they came out on to the pitch, the home side having already clinched promotion. North End also knowing a point would be enough to fight off the challenge of third-placed Halifax Town, but they also knew they needed both points if they wanted to ring the Championship back to Deepdale - providing they also beat Rotherham the following Tuesday night at home!

Fulham were the first to show their attacking intentions but the roar of the crowd was soon quietened as they saw the linesman's flag go up as Earle looked to have a clear run on Kelly's goal. North End weren't going to sit back and let the Cottagers come at them and Graham Hawkins headed inches over the bar from Clive Clark's corner. Alex Spark broke through the Cottagers defence but despite the efforts of Spavin and Lloyd, could not get a shot on target. Fulham hit back and won a flurry of corners but Kelly was in total control, calming the worries of the North End fans who had made the long trip.

North End then won a corner and Clark curled it in towards the near post, the ball was flicked on and Ricky HEPPOLETTE dived at full stretch to head the ball past Webster. Fulham almost equalised a minute later but Hawkins cleared Barrett's shot-cum-centre off the line after Kelly had been beaten. The Cottagers were finding it hard to break down the North End defence which was the meanest in the Third Division but right on the referee's whistle at the end of the first-half, Kelly made a brilliant save, diving full length to grab a Johnson shot.

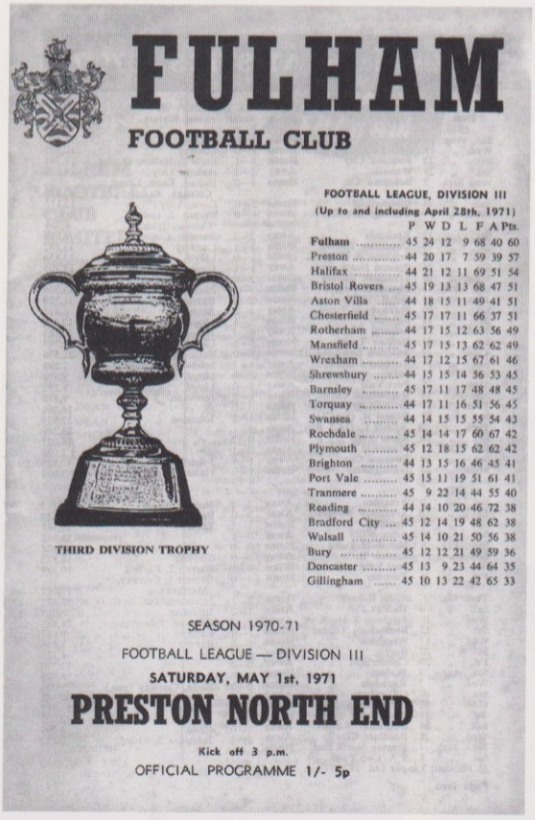
North End's defensive capabilities were severely tested at the start of the second-half, although it was North End who nearly added a second. On a counter-attack, Bobby Ham was given a half chance and hit a snap shot from 20 yards that scraped Webster's right-hand upright.

Kelly was the busier of the two goalkeepers, racing out to save at the feet of Johnson and then plucking a Pentecost cross off the head of Les Barrett. Fulham manager Bill Dodgin junior brought on Vic Halom and he could have won the Championship for the Cottagers in the last few minutes, having two chances to score an equaliser. After shooting narrowly wide from a Barrett pass, he headed over the bar from the same source, a Barrett cross.

At the final whistle both sets of supporters cheered the team off the pitch after securing promotion - now all that was left was for Rotherham to come to Deepdale the following Tuesday to see if the Championship could be won.

What the papers said:

An editorial piece in the Evening Post espoused the thoughts of everyone in the town, it read: 'Congratulations Preston on getting back to the Second Division at the first attempt. It's been a close call in recent weeks and they have given many supporters some uneasy moments since Easter but everything has turned out all right in the end in spite of the setbacks. Now it is ironic that North End will be playing their near neighbours Blackpool, once again next season. Certainly the fans can be proud again.'



FULHAM
FOOTBALL CLUB

THIRD DIVISION TROPHY

FOOTBALL LEAGUE, DIVISION III
(Up to and including April 28th, 1971)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Fulham	45	24	12	9	68	40	60
Preston	44	20	17	7	59	39	57
Halifax	44	21	12	11	69	51	54
Bristol Rovers	45	19	13	13	68	47	51
Aston Villa	44	18	15	11	49	41	51
Chesterfield	45	17	17	11	66	37	51
Rotherham	44	17	15	12	63	56	49
Mansfield	45	17	15	13	62	62	49
Wrexham	44	17	12	15	67	61	46
Shrewsbury	44	15	15	14	56	53	45
Barnsley	45	17	11	17	48	48	45
Torquay	44	17	11	16	51	56	45
Swansea	44	14	15	15	55	54	43
Rochdale	45	14	14	17	60	67	42
Plymouth	45	12	18	15	62	62	42
Brighton	44	13	15	16	46	45	41
Port Vale	45	15	11	19	51	61	41
Tranmere	45	9	22	14	44	55	40
Reading	44	14	10	20	46	72	38
Bradford City	45	12	14	19	48	62	38
Walsall	45	14	10	21	50	56	38
Bury	45	12	12	21	49	59	36
Doncaster	45	13	9	23	44	64	35
Gillingham	45	10	13	22	42	65	33

SEASON 1970-71
FOOTBALL LEAGUE — DIVISION III
SATURDAY, MAY 1st, 1971
PRESTON NORTH END
Kick off 3 p.m.
OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 1/- 5p

The League table says it all, and was featured on the front of the matchday programme. Whoever won this game was likely to win the title.

Dave Wilson was the regular number 7 until losing his place to Ricky Hepolette after Christmas. In the Championship run-in he had to be content with the subs bench.

Preston North End v Rotherham United

Tuesday 4th May 1971

We are the Champions

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Rotherham United 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Spavin 2; Clark) **Rotherham United:** (-)
Attendance	28,224
Referee	J. K. Taylor (Wolverhampton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; Ross; McNab; Bird; Hawkins; Spavin; Heppolette; Ham; Lloyd; Spark; Clark; sub Wilson; **Rotherham United:** Tunks; Houghton; Hudson; Ferguson; Mielczarek; Swift; Fantham; Bentley; Gilbert; Johnson; Mullen (Hague)

North End needed a win over Rotherham United in their last game of the season to claim two points and overhaul Fulham at the top of the Third Division.

The opening ten minutes were very scrappy with Preston being unable to settle down but then they began to turn it on. Roy Tunks saved well from Bobby Ham, whilst at the other end Mielczarek headed just over the top from Johnson's corner. North End took the lead on 26 minutes when Bentley failed to cut out Heppolette near the left touchline. The ball moved across the face of the penalty area from Spark to SPAVIN and the wing-half's shot gave Tunks no chance as it looped into the far corner of the net.

On the half-hour mark, North End scored a second goal when referee Jack Taylor adjudged Mielczarek's challenge on Ham to be unfair, though the Rotherham man did come away with the ball. Three North End players lined up in front of the Rotherham wall and as SPAVIN prepared to take the kick some 20 yards out, they all ducked down, allowing the North End midfielder to curl the kick over everyone and in by the near post with Tunks apparently unsighted.

The Whites surged forward and Heppolette twice almost increased the lead and then on the stroke of half-time, Graham Hawkins brushed the post with a header from a Spavin free-kick. Early in the second-half, Bobby Ham landed a shot onto the crossbar and then on 55 minutes it was Ham again, so quick and elusive in the box, who forced Tunks into making a superb save.

After 70 minutes, North End set the seal on this Championship performance when Tunks again saved from Ham at the expense of a corner. From Clark's kick, Mielczarek stretched to head the ball clear but it skimmed his head, looped over Tunks and although Hudson on the line kicked clear, both the linesman and the referee

ruled that the ball had already crossed the line and the goal was credited to CLARK.

There were just five minutes remaining when Rotherham launched their first serious attack of the second-half. Swift broke through the North End defence and though his shot seemed to have the beating of Alan Kelly, it whistled over the bar.

At the final whistle, thousands of North End fans spilled on to the Deepdale pitch, milling in front of the main stand, almost delirious with excitement after this win had taken their side to the Third Division Championship, a point ahead of Fulham.

What the papers said:

Adrian O'Connell writing on the front page of the Lancashire Evening Post said: 'It was a time of gathering ecstasy for North End fans as they looked at their watches seconds before he final whistle went at Deepdale. For several minutes before, masses of supporters crouched impatiently on the touchlines. Then thousands of them surged onto the pitch where only seconds before, Preston had sealed the Third Division Championship. Victory banners were carried like sails across the pitch. The turf was submerged in a human tide of cheering and waving supporters.'

Graham Hawkins was outstanding at the centre of North End's defence. He finds time to celebrate after the Rotherham game (left). He was also an ever present in the Championship winning season. If ever a man deserved a celebration drink, it was him!

Preston North End v Bristol City

Saturday 15th September 1973

Kelly injury ends distinguished career

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Bristol City 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Young) **Bristol City:** (Fear)
Attendance	10,790
Referee	J. K. Taylor (Wolverhampton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; McMahon; McNab; Baxter; Hawkins; Stiles; Lamb; Bruce; Holden; Burns (Morley); Young; **Bristol City:** Cashley; Sweeney; Drysdale; Emmanuel; Rodgers (Gillies); Merrick; Tainton; Ritchie; Gould; Gow; Fear;

It was another tragic season for North End with relegation to the Third Division. One of the bitterest pills to swallow was the loss of Republic of Ireland international goalkeeper Alan Kelly, whose injury in this fixture ended his career, which is why this unremarkable game deserves inclusion in the list of memorable matches.

North End were now managed by former England hero Bobby Charlton, who at this stage was just manager and his captain was another former World Cup winner, Nobby Stiles. The referee was Jack Taylor, who would go on to take charge of the World Cup Final the following summer and who was back at Deepdale in the summer of 2000 as part of the Football League team who presented Sean Gregan with the Second Division Championship.

The visitors started brightly, winning a corner in the first minute but North End cleared without any difficulty. Graham Hawkins then conceded a free-kick a few yards outside the penalty area to stop Fear but as the ball was floated over the Preston 'wall' Gould was flagged offside.

Preston's first real attack came down the left but Cashley comfortably saved Neil Young's shot. Alex Bruce looked dangerous up front and he hit a low drive which the 'keeper had to push round the post. Bruce and Young had built up a good understanding since the latter's arrival from Manchester City and they were involved in one of the game's best moves. Taking possession just inside the City half, Bruce played a quick one-two with Young, the winger crossing the ball for Bruce to head narrowly wide. North End took the lead after 19 minutes when Bruce returned the earlier favour, crossing for Neil YOUNG to head the ball into the top right-hand corner of Cashley's goal, It was a great header from Young for he had been on the edge of the area when he met the ball, getting a lot of power behind it and directing it perfectly.

Bruce was unlucky not to get a penalty, being brought down a yard outside the box by Drysdale who was immediately booked. Gould nearly followed him after getting a stern talking to from Jack Taylor just before he break after charging Alan Kelly twice within a minute.

Just minutes after the restart, Neil Young was inches wide with a powerfully struck free-kick. North End sent on England Youth international Tony Morley for the injured Burns whilst Bristol manager Alan Dicks replaced Rodgers, bringing on Don Gillies.

Soon afterwards, Kelly was badly injured after diving forward to stop a shot from Gow. In fact, he had to be stretchered off the field and Stuart Baxter took over in goal. He soon earned the

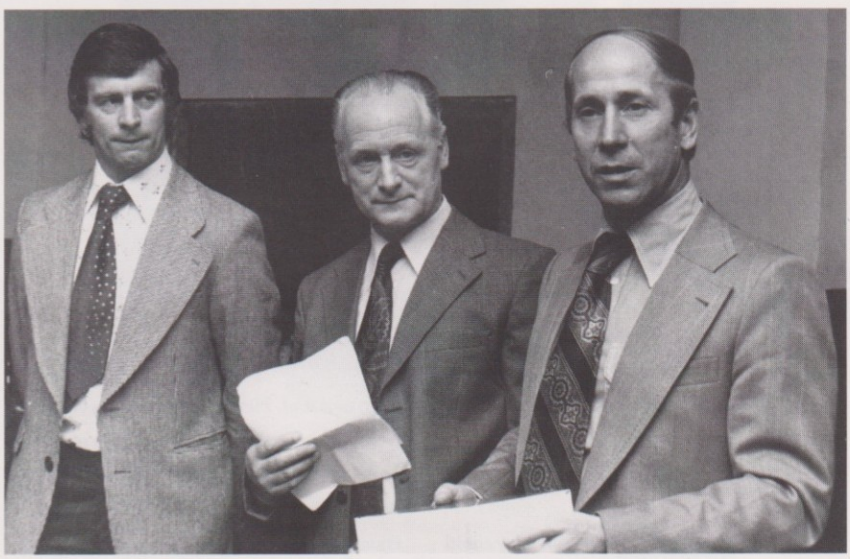
cheers of the crowd when he rose highest at a corner to claim the ball but ten-men North End were now up against it and with just ten minutes remaining, Gow's cross was headed past the stand-in 'keeper by Keith FEAR. North End's defence had hardly had time to get organised after the loss of Kelly and were lucky not to concede a second goal in the dying moments of the game.

Kelly played more games than any other player for North End - amassing a total of 512 appearences. It was no surprise that fans voted to name the new Town End after one of it's favourite sons.

What the papers said:

In a recent edition of the Lancashire Evening Post, Bobby Charlton had written a tribute to the North End 'keeper: ':Lots of things have been said and written in tribute to Preston goalkeeper Alan Kelly in the last ten years by North End players, managers, directors and supporters and the Eire international has often been praised in the Post. Now I too have found him to be one of the finest professionals in the game. I have come into contact with many good players and no-one has put more into the job than he has. The mere fact that Preston has such a man has delighted me. We have had to lean on him heavily and I would not have chosen to have anybody else. He has responded with many great saves and it is marvellous to have someone like him when you are going through a bad time. Such a period is very hard for a 'keeper but Kelly's skills have not dwindled with age. In fact, he is one of the most dedicated professionals I know and works hard all the time. I am a great believer in this attitude and he has always been prepared to do more for the club than for himself. He is as fearless as anyone I have seen and his timing and positional play are both faultless. I rank him as good as any 'keeper I have seen and put him with the best half dozen who have played in Britain in the last twenty years.'

Alan Kelly played 447 league games and 65 Cup games - still a club record.



Kelly has become a North End institution. Not surprisingly the new Town End has been named in his honour and is pictured with Sir Tom Finney and Sir Bobby Charlton.

Preston North End v Nottingham Forest

Sunday 10th February 1974

Sunday service gives North End first win of the year

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Nottingham Forest 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Richardson og; Bird)
	Nottingham Forest: (Burns og)
Attendance	13,486
Referee	J. Yates (Redditch)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; McMahon; Snookes; Hawkins; Baxter; Bird; Lamb; Sadler; Holden (Williams); Burns; Treacy;
	Nottingham Forest: Barron; O'Kane; Winfield; Hindley; Cottam; Richardson; McKenzie; Lyall; Martin; Jackson; Bowyer; sub Delaney;

There are a number of reasons that make this game memorable. It was won with a penalty save, it was North End's first win of 1974 but most memorably it was the first game North End had played at Deepdale on a Sunday.

It wasn't the first time they had played on the Sabbath however, as the week before at Selhurst Park they had taken on Crystal Palace and lost, despite a penalty save by John Brown.

A win would give the team hope that they could retain their place in Division Two and the performance at Palace had given them hope, despite losing to another of the relegation battlers. North End supporters certainly responded to the attraction of Sunday football, 3,000 more than the average turned out to boost the attendance to 13,486 and they responded also to Bobby Charlton's appeal to get vociferously behind the team.

North End played extremely well in the opening 20 minutes and if the finshing had been better they could have gone into an early two or even three goal lead. However, on 25 minutes, Forest took the lead against the run of play with a fluke goal. A right-wing corner taken by Paul Richardson was turned into his own goal by Francis BURNS as he leapt to challenge Duncan McKenzie at the near post. It looked like being an afternoon for flukes when North End equalised just before the interval. John McMahon put in a shot which appeared to be going wide when it hit RICHARDSON and was deflected over Jim Barron's head into the net.

The second-half lacked real quality with neither side testing the opposition 'keeper. North End had Francis Burns booked for arguing and Forest's McKenzie went into the referee's book for the same offence. However, there was to be a dramatic last five minutes that would lave the crowd with plenty to talk about over their Sunday meals.

First, Alan Lamb worked his way to the by-line before delivering an inch-perfect cross for John BIRD to give North End the lead with is first goal of the campaign.

In the last minute, Redditch referee Jack Yates adjudged that former North End favourite George Lyall had been fouled by David Sadler and awarded Forest a penalty. Graham Hawkins was booked as the Preston players protested and there was tremendous booing as Tommy Jackson came up to take the kick. He struck the ball to John Brown's right but for the second week running, he got down low and made a fine save - the crowd erupted and the two points were North End's.

If Brown had his way then every game would be played on a Sunday but even that would probably not have helped North End's plight as they went into the last game of the season against Jack Charlton's Middlesbrough looking at life in Division Three once again.

Scarborough v Preston North End

Saturday 13th December 1975

North End hit all-time low!

Final Score	**Scarborough 3 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Seamer Road
Scorers	**Scarborough:** (Dunn; Woodall; Marshall) **PNE:** (Smith 2;)
Attendance	4,100
Referee	T. Farley (Newton Aycliffe)
Line-ups	**Scarborough:** Barnard; Fountain; Barker; H. Dunn; Ayre; H. A. Dunn; Jackson; Barmby; Woodall; Hewitt (Abbey); Marshall; **PNE:** Tunks; McMahon; Williams; Lawrenson; Sadler; Spark; Coleman; Burns; Smith; Elwiss; Morley; sub Bruce;

Wintry weather dealt a severe blow to North End's eagerly anticipated FA Cup match against Northern Premier League Scarborough, reducing the crowd from a possible 6,000 to 4,100. Although the fact that the BBC announced the game had been postponed, wouldn't have helped!

Scarborough knew that victory over Third Division North End would ensure them of a place in the third round of the competition for the first time since 1938, also the year that North End last won the FA Cup. The Preston goal had an amazing first minute escape when Marshall floated a free-kick into the goalmouth and the ball was only partially cleared. From a cross by Dunn, Barmby headed past Tunks only for Burns to clear off the line.

Both sides were finding ground conditions difficult but Tunks saved confidently when Jackson fired in a free-kick from the right. The game was temporarily held up when a young supporter refused to return the ball and he was taken away - amid applause - by the police. Coleman was warned for a tackle on Harry Dunn and shortly afterwards Lawrenson drew a similar warning for a tackle which left Jackson limping. Scarborough went dramatically ahead after 25 minutes when Tunks pushed out a free-kick by Fountain through a crowd of players. The ball was returned by Harry A. DUNN and though it was deflected past the North End 'keeper by Ayre, the 'Boro wing-half claimed the goal.

Preston soon drew level when young reserve striker John SMITH ran on to a Francis Burns pass before shooting past Barnard. The quick equaliser had a settling effect on North End and they went ahead in the 35th minute again through SMITH. This time he stabbed the ball past Barnard from close range following a melee in the "Boro goalmouth. The Whites were now on top and on the stroke of half-time, Barnard dived to deflect a shot by Morley for a corner. The Preston winger won an early corner at the start of the second-half but Coleman shot well over the bar in the scramble which followed.

Ground conditions were deteriorating as the snow seemed to be freezing but North End were showing great skill on the difficult surface. Smith turned on a sixpence to beat Dunn and shoot narrowly past Barnard's right-hand post. Scarborough manager Colin Appleton sent on substitute Abbey in place of Hewitt as the non-League side threw everything into attack. 'Boro equalised in the 70th minute when Marshall's free-kick was back-headed past Tunks by John WOODALL. The striker was so elated, that he performed a somersault on the snow.

Morley's shot on the turn flashed inches wide of the target. Barnard brought off a superb save to deprive Smith of a late winner but in the last minute, Sean MARSHALL got the winning goal after Woodall had headed back a right-wing corner. North End nearly snatched a face-saving equaliser in injury-time but David Sadler's header was cleared off the line.

Preston North End v Peterborough United

Tuesday 12th October 1976

Inspirational Bruce helps North End hit Posh for six

Final Score	**Preston North End 6 Peterborough United 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Bruce 3; Mitchell; Elwiss; Smith)
	Peterborough United: (Moss; Walker)
Attendance	5,651
Referee	G. Nolan (Stockport)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; Coleman; Williams; Burns; Sadler; Lawrenson; S. Doyle; Brown; Mitchell (Smith); Elwiss; Bruce;
	Peterborough United: Steele; Hindley; Oakes; B. Doyle; Turner (Walker); Carmichael; Nixon; Bradford; Moss; Gregory; Robson;

Only 24 hours before this floodlit night match, North End chairman Alan Jones said that it was time for the big push to try and join the contenders for promotion. His words turned out to be prophetic as North End recorded their biggest win for years, leapfrogging over Peterborough!

It was Alex BRUCE who put Preston ahead in the sixth minute when his mis-hit shot completely deceived 'Posh' 'keeper Eric Steele and dribbled through his legs ! But Peterborough fought back and scored a splendid equaliser after 13 minutes when a Nixon free-kick from the left was backheeled by Bradford to MOSS whose first time shot beat Tunks. Preston grabbed a second goal midway through the half when a ball from midfield found Bruce. He slipped the ball inside to MITCHELL who, totally unmarked, guided his shot past Steele. BRUCE was having an outstanding game and on 25 minutes, his shot cannoned off Chris Turner and past Steele.

Peterborough could have reduced the arrears on the half-hour mark but Gregory's powerfully struck shot was brilliantly pushed over the bar by Tunks. The visitors were unlucky when on the stroke of half-time, Ernie Moss' header was cleared off the line by Jimmy Brown.

The wet conditions certainly helped the forwards and both Bruce and Elwiss went close before North End extended their lead after 61 minutes. Elwiss received a pass on the left from David Sadler, went past Carmichael with the minimum of effort, pushed the ball to BRUCE who from 20 yards out, thundered a shot past Steele to complete the first hat-trick of his career.

Posh were ragged, winning nothing in midfield and looking ready to receive a good hiding.

However, North End had to wait until the 80th minute before they went nap. Bruce began the trouble again when he darted into the heart of the Posh defence and Oakes dived in to foul him on the edge of the area. Williams stepped up, sidefooted the ball to ELWISS whose brilliantly taken shot curled round the defensive wall and into the net.

Less than thirty seconds later, left-back Gary Williams raced down the wing from the kick-off threw across a centre and with contemptuous ease, substitute SMITH headed past Steele from six yards out.

With just six minutes to go, Peterborough pulled a goal back when Doyle's corner was met by WALKER who guided a header past Tunks.

The final whistle signalled a mass pitch invasion by the home fans, many of whom thought North End were unlucky not to have got into double figures!

Preston North End v Colchester United

Saturday 28th February 1978

Four-goal Bruce destroys the U's

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Colchester United 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Bruce 4 (2 pens)
	Colchester United: (-)
Attendance	9,225
Referee	P. Willis (Durham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; Coleman; Cameron; Burns; Baxter; Cross; Doyle; Haselgrave; Thomson; Elwiss; Bruce; sub; Robinson;
	Colchester United: Walker; Cook; Smith; Wignall; Dowman; Leslie; Rowles; Foley; Allinson (Dyer); Evans; Jones;

During the club's promotion-winning season of 1977-78, North End entertained Colchester United in what was definitely a game of two halves.

The game had been a poor one in the first-half from the spectators point of view, though to be fair, Colchester had made the better scoring opportunities in breaks from defence. United's Eddie Rowles missed a golden opportunity to give his side the lead after 13 minutes when he failed to get a shot in from as Leslie centre. Two minutes later, he missed another good chance when he headed straight at Preston 'keeper Roy Tunks. Shortly afterwards, Steve Foley headed on Ian Allinson's cross but again Rowles failed to make the most of it.

North End kept plugging away and on the half-hour, Elwiss forced United 'keeper Mike Walker into making a fine save at the foot of the post. Towards the end of the first-half, Alex Bruce put in three shots but Walker was equal to the task. Francis Burns also managed to get a shot on target which Walker pushed round the post for a corner. As half-time approached, both Foley and Wignall were booked for fouls on Thomson, a sign that the visitors could not keep their composure for ever.

North End looked much sharper after the interval and Thomson as most unlucky with a shot that grazed the bar after a first time effort was blocked following an Elwiss pass. Coleman had similar luck with a powerful drive which passed inches outside Walker's right-and post.

The game was an hour old when North End took the lead from the penalty-spot. Steve Dowman was adjudged to have handled the ball to prevent Bruce getting past both Micky Cook and himself just inside the box. BRUCE took the penalty, hitting the ball hard and high to the Colchester 'keeper's left. Mike Elwiss had provided the pass to Bruce that led to the spot-kick and quarter-of-an-hour later, it was he who found Bruce again with a left wing centre following a Thomson pass. BRUCE headed the ball past Walker. It made up for Bruce's disallowed goal at Cambridge a week earlier.

Following a foul by Steve Wignall on Thomson, BRUCE completed his hat-trick with a second penalty and the scoring was completed in the 85th minute when BRUCE crashed home a close range shot after Thomson had just failed to connect with another fine cross by Elwiss.

Alex Bruce, who scored all four of North End's goals could hardly have imagined that he would have had such success after a goalless first-half!

Preston North End v Peterborough United

Saturday 1st April 1978

Match of the Day cameras witness promotion setback

Final Score	**Preston North End 0 Peterborough United 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (-)
	Peterborough United: (Robson)
Attendance	9,695
Referee	J. D. Hough (Macclesfield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; McMahon; Cameron; Burns; Baxter; Cross; Coleman; Haselgrave; Thomson (S. Doyle); Elwiss; Bruce;
	Peterborough United: Waugh; Hindley; Hughes; B. Doyle; Turner; Ross; Slough; McEwan; Butlin; Anderson; Robson; sub; Carmichael;

North End were in a titanic battle for promotion back to Division Two. One of their main rivals for promotion were Peterborough United, which is why the 'Match of the Day' cameras were at Deepdale for this clash, which would be shown alongside the days other top game, Arsenal v Manchester United.

North End had previously only lost one game at home all season, against divisional leaders Wrexham, so the near 10,000 crowd were expectant of a North End victory. Preston manager Nobby Stiles recalled Mick Baxter and Graham Cross to his side after the pair passed late fitness tests on knee and thigh injuries respectively, but Alan Spavin who had made his only start of the season a few days previously against Bury, was left out.

Peterborough manager John Barnwell named an unchanged side to the one that beat Hereford the previous Tuesday night. Posh arrived at Deepdale with the best defensive record in the Third Division, determined that the fans would not see a repeat of their 6-2 defeat in the previous season's corresponding fixture.

Bruce was the first to get a chance to open the scoring, collecting a Burns through ball and hitting a good shot which Waugh deflected behind for a corner. The Peterborough 'keeper made two more fine saves from McMahon and Elwiss but despite the pressure North End were putting on the Posh goal, it was the visitors who opened the scoring after 16 minutes.

Bob Doyle made progress down the right-wing before delivering a cross that Butlin flicked on to Tommy ROBSON who placed a well-struck shot past Tunks.

Elwiss then broke free after an obvious foul but the referee failed to play advantage much to the disapproval of the home fans. North End had a flurry of free-kicks but the Peterborough defence wasn't really tested by any of them, the best opportunity ending when Bruce handled from a Thomson pass.

Towards the end of the first-half, Peterborough almost added a second through Anderson but Tunks made a fine save.

North End pressed immediately after the restart, Waugh saving a Thomson header and a Bruce free-kick. Nobby Stiles sent on Stephen Doyle for Thomson in an attempt to get more control in the middle of the park. Coleman was upended in the area but the referee again angered North End fans by turning down their appeals for a penalty.

Coleman went into the referee's book in the 88th minute as the frustrations threatened to boil over and in injury-time, Waugh made a fine save from a Bruce header. Peterborough's win now meant that they were only four points behind North End with two games in hand, so

the last few games were going to prove vital in the battle for promotion.

By the final day of the Season, North End and Peterborough were still battling it out for the final promotion spot. North End secured a vital point with an Alex Bruce equaliser at Shrewsbury. Meanwhile Peterborough were surprisingly beaten. This left Posh two points behind North End, but with a game still to play. North End fans had their nerves stretched to breaking point waiting for the result to come through. But, Wrexham held Peterborough to a draw and Nobby Stiles and the rest of the team were popping the Champagne corks.

What the papers said:

Norman Shakeshaft saw this as a blow to the promotion chances, he wrote: 'Preston's hopes of gaining promotion to Division Two suffered a setback at Deepdale today when they were beaten 1-0 by Peterborough United. Peterborough who beat North End 1-0 at the London Road ground on 31 December also became the first side to complete a double over Preston this season.'

Francis Burns, like manager Nobby Stiles, had moved to Deepdale after an illustrious career with Manchester United.

Preston North End v Shrewsbury Town

Saturday 29th April 1978

North End draw and have to wait two days for promotion party

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Shrewsbury Town 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Elwiss; Bruce) **Shrewsbury Town:** (Atkins; Keay)
Attendance	16,078
Referee	T. Farley (Co. Durham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; McMahon; Cameron; Burns; Baxter; Cross; Coleman; Haselgarve; Robinson (Doyle); Elwiss; Bruce; **Shrewsbury Town:** Mulhearn; King; Leonard; Keay; Hayes; Lindsay; Irvine; Maguire; Atkins; Biggins; Turner; sub; Griffin;

North End went into the final game of the season needing a win and Peterborough to slip up in their last two games against Chester and then Wrexham.

North End had lost the previous Tuesday at Rotherham and fans were already biting their fingernails before kick-off, hoping the team would settle their nerves with a good start.

Nobby Stiles had kept an unchanged line-up for the seventh game in succession as did the Shrewsbury manager Richie Barker, who had said the day before the game that he would take sadistic pleasure if his team prevented North End from going up!

North End made the worst possible start, going a goal behind inside the first minute. A free-kick was conceded on the Shrewsbury right and King centred for ATKINS to head past Tunks. North End responded with a series of attacks and won three corners in quick succession. Elwiss then wasted a fine opportunity before Bruce lobbed Mulhearn only for Leonard to clear off the line.

Atkins had to have lengthy treatment after going down injured near the centre-circle and crowd trouble developed behind the Town End goal with the police having to eject a number of unruly fans. Tunks saved well from Atkins and Biggins before in the 38th minute, North End finally equalised, much to the relief of the home crowd. Awarded a free-kick on the right of the penalty area, ELWISS blasted the ball through the Shrewsbury wall and past Mulhearn - it was the skipper's 17th goal of the season.

North End had the chance to take the lead shortly after but Coleman shot wide after good work by Robinson. However, Shrewsbury were ahead again just before the interval. The goal was a terrible blunder and came about as Burns was in the process of passing back to Tunks. KEAY ran up to challenge and got his foot to the ball to send it past the North End 'keeper.

North End came out with all guns blazing in the second-half. Baxter headed just wide from a corner, Bruce shot narrowly wide and then headed a right-wing cross just past the post. The Whites continued to press forward in search of the equalising goal and Haselgrave shot wide after a Robinson effort had been blocked . Eventually the pressure told and with just eight minutes left, North End got a deserved equaliser. Baxter headed a right-wing cross across the six-yard box and BRUCE nipped in ahead of the defenders to slot home his 30th goal of the season. Going all out to get a winner, the game got very tense and in the dying moments, Leonard was booked after a skirmish in the Shrewsbury area.

At the end of the game, it remained all-square and the North End fans invaded the pitch but they still had to wait. Chester had done the Whites a favour, beating Peterborough 4-3 and then 48 hours later, promotion was finally confirmed after Peterborough failed to beat champions, Wrexham, leaving North End in third place on goal difference.

Preston North End v Blackburn Rovers

Tuesday 22nd August 1978

Bruce's brilliance destroys ragged Rovers

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Blackburn Rovers 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Robinson; Doyle; Bruce 2)
	Blackburn Rovers: (Gregory)
Attendance	15,412
Referee	R. Matthewson (Bolton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; Cameron (Smith); Wilson; Doyle; Baxter; Cross; Burns; Haselgrave; Robinson; Thomson; Bruce;
	Blackburn Rovers: Butcher; Hird; Bailey; Fowler; Keeley; Waddington; Metcalfe (Brotherston); Gregory; Radford; Parkes; Aston;

As the new boys in the Second Division, North End came up against Rovers, fifth the previous season, with this being a true test of their credentials. It made this exciting derby all the more special for both the players and the supporters.

The teams came out to a rapturous welcome from a large expectant crowd and North End began the game attacking the Kop End, although they were not to have the start they would have hoped for. Only three minutes had been played when Danny Cameron accidentally handled the ball just outside the area. Rovers' captain Tony Parkes slipped the ball to Stuart Metcalfe who cannoned a rocket shot against the crossbar. The ball bounced out to David GREGORY who headed home over the outstretched arms of 'keeper Roy Tunks.

From then on, Rovers were never in the game. North End equalised in the 12th minute when Alex Bruce flicked a delightful ball to Francis Burns. The former Manchester United winger crossed hard and low into the penalty area where Mick ROBINSON came thundering in to steer the ball past John Butcher. North End were creating opening after opening and Ricky Thomson, Robinson and Sean Haselgrave all came close before Stephen DOYLE put Preston ahead in the 26th minute. The goal was created by Bruce who cut in from the left and laid the ball through perfectly for the Welsh youngster to side-foot the ball under Butcher's body.

Metcalfe, who had received a knock early in the game, limped off to be replaced by Noel Brotherston but there was still no let-up for the visitors. Just before half-time, Rovers had another lucky escape when a great move involving Thomson and Haselgrave resulted in Robinson firing just over the top.

Robinson again went close shortly after the break, heading a right-wing cross inches wide. Harry Wilson was booked for a foul on Gregory but just five minutes into the second-half, North End extended their lead. Rovers' defender Kevin Hird failed to control a loose ball. Thomson seized the opportunity to intercept and put BRUCE away on the right. There was no stopping his 25-yard angled drive which bounced off the far post and into the gaping net.

Rovers rallied briefly and Gregory managed a snap shot which Tunks parried before Baxter hooked it clear. North End went 4-1 up in the 74th minute after Thomson's corner was headed goalwards by Francis Burns. Butcher blocked the effort but the ball landed in a melee of players. Bruce was the first to react, firing from point-blank range. Again Butcher was in the way, but BRUCE was not going to be denied and he blasted home into the roof of the net at the second attempt.

North End continued to push forward and Baxter headed just wide before Bruce saw his shot well saved by Butcher - his and the fans hopes of a hat-trick were not to be realised although he certainly deserved it!

Derby County v Preston North End

Wednesday 6th May 1981

North End go down despite win

Final Score	**Derby County 1 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Baseball Ground
Scorers	**Derby County:** (Swindlehurst)
	PNE: (Bruce 2)
Attendance	15,050
Referee	P. Willis (Co.Durham)
Line-ups	**Derby County:** Jones; Osgood; Buckley; Sheridan; McFarland; Spooner; Reid; Hector; Wilson (Clayton); Swindlehurst; Emson;
	PNE: Tunks; Taylor; Anderson; Haselgrave; Baxter; Blackley; Coleman; Bell; Elliott; Houston (O'Riordan); Bruce;

Nobby Stiles' side went into he final game of the season needing a win to stand any chance of avoiding relegation and then they would have to see if champions West Ham United could beat Cardiff City and do the Whites a favour!

The papers weren't giving much hope, telling readers that North End were only a 10-1 shot to survive the drop. Even Club President Tom Finney wasn't too hopeful, being quoted as saying 'games have been thrown away this season. We have let in some daft goals and have not scored enough after dominating some games. It as been a poor season and we have not played well. He did have words of encouragement going into the game. 'It would be a wonderful thing if we can win tonight. We have everything to fight for and nothing to lose and should not give up. But all we can do is to win and rely on West Ham to beat Cardiff.' This was to be Derby captain and future manager Roy McFarland's final game for the Rams and there was a carnival atmosphere at the Baseball Ground prior to the kick-off with a number of end of season presentations, which did nothing to help the nerves of the North End players and supporters. The game itself was not a good one, North End missing several first-half chances before Frank Sheridan was booked for a foul on Bruce just before the interval.

The second-half also started slowly, John Blackley going into the book for a foul on Swindlehurst and with both defences on top, there seemed little chance of any goals. Just after the hour-mark, both sides made a change. Stiles sent on Don O'Riordan for Graham Houston and Derby manager Colin Addison replaced Kevin Wilson with John Clayton.

Then on 71 minutes, North End finally got the goal they needed. The ball had been crossed by Coleman but Derby captain McFarland hesitated following a shout from goalkeeper Roger Jones. This gave BRUCE the chance to nip in and slot the ball home unchallenged. Derby's equaliser after 81 minutes was also the result of a mistake when North End 'keeper Roy Tunks came off his line and missed a left-wing cross from Paul Emson. Dave SWINDLEHURST was able to head into the net and Tunks was left holding his head in his hands.

There were just two minutes left when County 'keeper Jones dropped another Coleman centre. This time from a quickly taken Brian Taylor throw-in after he collided with a defender. BRUCE again was happy to take his chance to score his 15th goal of the season. In the process of the collision, Jones had dislocated a finger and Derby had to finish the game with ten men, Steve Buckley going in goal.

At the final whistle, the joy of victory was soon tempered by the news that Cardiff had held the champions to a goalless draw. It was ill-luck for North End who had given their all to get the victory but in the end, the deficiencies of the season proved to add up to too many dropped points and missed chances and so began one of the worst eras in North End's history.

Preston North End v Portsmouth

Saturday 5th September 1981

Three point win for Doc's Whites

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Portsmouth 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Bruce) **Portsmouth:** (-)
Attendance	6,124
Referee	G. Tyson (Sunderland)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Litchfield; Coleman; Westwell; Clark; O'Riordan; Blackley; Houston (Walsh); S. Doyle; McGee; Bruce; Naughton; **Portsmouth:** Knight; McLaughlin; Vincy; Kamara; Aizlewood; Rollings (Tait); Gregory; R. Doyle; Rafferty; Berry; Rogers;

North End's first opponents at Deepdale during the 1981-82 centenary season, a campaign which also saw three points offered for a win, were Portsmouth.

North End had lost their opening game of the season 2-1 at Millwall and were looking to pick up their first points of the campaign against the south coast club.

New manager Tommy Docherty's attacking formation of 4-2-4 was spearheaded by previous season's leading scorer, Alex Bruce, who had found himself in and out of the side during the reign of Nobby Stiles. Following Docherty's arrival at Deepdale during the summer, Bruce asked to be taken off the club's transfer list.

Pompey played very well during the early part of the game but didn't create too many chances, their best coming after 11 minutes when Bill Rafferty forced Litchfield to turn the ball round the post. At the other end, Bruce had the ball in the Portsmouth net but the 'goal' was disallowed for a foul on Andy Rollings. Shortly afterwards, the Portsmouth central defender had to be substituted, being replaced by striker Mick Tait. North End had the ball in Pompey's net for a second time but McGee, who was left with a simple tap-in, was adjudged to have fouled keeper Alan Knight.

Knight, a former England Youth international was in sparkling form, keeping out goalbound shots from Coleman, Houston and Naughton which would most certainly have beaten most other 'keepers. Paul McGee cut inside from the left and unleashed a powerful shot from the edge of the area which Knight, his view obscured by his defence, only saw at the last moment and turned it over the bar for a corner.

The Portsmouth keeper was eventually beaten just before the interval when Alex BRUCE scored with a tremendous volley after a Graham Houston centre had been flicked forward to him by Paul McGee. The 20-year-old Pompey custodian also made a brave double save from McGee as the first-half came to a close.

The second-half was barely a minute old when Portsmouth defender Chris Kamara was booked by Sunderland referee George Tyson for a foul on Naughton whilst North End's Don O'Riordan, who was having a fine game, also went into the referee's notebook for deliberately handling the ball.

Alex Bruce and his new partner, Republic of Ireland international Paul McGee were causing all sorts of problems for Portsmouth's back four and both were unlucky not to extend North End's lead. Knight got down to his right to keep out a Bruce piledriver and then somehow twisted in mid-air to save a Paul McGee header. In complete contrast, his opposite number Peter Litchfield had very little to do.

In an extremely one-sided game, Preston fully deserved their win and certainly only the brilliant goalkeeping of Alan Knight prevented them getting several more goals.

Preston North End v Burnley

Tuesday 20th October 1981

Not much to celebrate

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Burnley 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (O'Riordan) **Burnley:** (Wharton)
Attendance	7,521
Referee	P. Willis (Co.Durham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Litchfield; Coleman; McAteer; Clark; Booth; O'Riordan; Kelly; Buckley; Bruce; Doyle; Dunn (Taylor); **Burnley:** Stevenson; Laws; Overson; Phelan; Dobson; Wharton; Scott; Steven; Young; Hamilton; Taylor; sub; Potts;

This fixture had been chosen in advance as the game to celebrate North End's centenary and during the half-time interval, Manchester United's Sir Matt Busby presented Chairman Alan Jones with a clock on behalf of the Football League.

Despite the celebrations, North End manager Tommy Docherty didn't even attend the game, having been involved in a court case in London. Assistant-manager Ken Shellito was in charge and was looking for North End to score their first league goal in five games, their last coming four weeks previously in the form of Steve Doyle at Newport County.

Despite the night being one of intended celebrations, the attendance of 7,521 was only 2,000 more than the previous Saturday's goalless draw with Reading and those who had turned up were certainly not treated to a fine footballing encounter.

The first-half was a fairly dour affair, North End kicking towards the Town End, creating few chances to test Stevenson in the Burnley goal. In fact the home side's best efforts came in the game's opening exchanges as Alex Bruce tested the Clarets' 'keeper with a long range effort that flashed past the post and then Doyle headed over from a Kelly cross.

Most of the game was being played in midfield but the visitors created the best opening of the first period after 27 minutes, Young going through only for Litchfield to come out quickly and gather at the striker's feet.

After the half-time presentations, both sides came out looking to be more adventurous. The crowd were finally given something to celebrate after 58 minutes when North End scored their first goal in almost 430 minutes of league football. Doyle won a corner on the left-and side and John Kelly swung the ball in to Tommy Booth on the front post. He flicked it on and the ball fell nicely to Don O'RIORDAN whose shot deflected off Barry Dunn and into the back of the net - O'Riordan's first goal for North End since he was signed in 1978!

The joy wasn't to last for long and four minutes later, the Clarets hit back to equalise when Andy WHARTON scored with a good shot after Billy Hamilton had centred from the right from a Derek Scott pass. Shellito was forced to make a change in the 80th minute, Brian Taylor replacing Barry Dunn who had picked up a shin injury but despite the goals, the game failed to ignite and the only other memorable events were the booking of Steve Doyle and Andy McAteer for North End and Vince Overson for Burnley!

At the end of a night that should have celebrated North End's 100 years most people were talking about whether both sides were relegation candidates, although seven months later, while North End were languishing in 14th place, the Clarets would not only be celebrating promotion but a Championship victory!

What the papers said:

Norman Shakeshaft was certainly not impressed by either side, he wrote in the Evening Post the following day: 'Neither team deserved to win - and both clubs will be in danger of relegation in their centenary seasons unless the players improve and the squads are strengthened. Preston assistant-manager Ken Shellito had recalled Steve Doyle, one of the club's ten transfer-listed players but Doyle did not impress in front of an Everton scout watching him.

Don O'Riordan who scored North End's goal in this derby clash was one of only two ever presents in 1981-82 Season, the other being Alex Bruce.

Little did the fans know when this picture was taken that Docherty would only remain in charge for 17 games. In December 1981 he was replaced by Gordon Lee. North End ended the 1981-82 Season in mid-table obscurity. Burnley meanwhile topped the Division with 80 points, in the first Season when three points were awarded for a win.

Preston North End v Millwall

Saturday 28th August 1982

Elliott hat-trick stuns Lions

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Millwall 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Elliott 3, 1 pen)
	Millwall: (Chatterton; Neal)
Attendance	4,498
Referee	G. Owen (Anglesey)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Litchfield; Walsh; McAteer; O'Riordan; Westwell; Coleman; Kelly (Houston); Bell; Elliott; Naughton; Bruce;
	Millwall: Gleasure; Stevens; Robinson; Chatterton; Allardyce; Madden; Massey (Horrix); Carr; Aylott; Neal; West;

In the first game of a new League season, the Preston fans could not have asked for any better value for money as Steve Elliott netted his first hat-trick in a game full of scoring chances.

Amazingly, hat-trick hero Steve Elliott only missed one game all season - the return League fixture at the Den in January 1983.

Manager Gordon Lee had asked his men to play as well as they had when beating Second Division Bolton Wanderers in the Lancashire Cup. They did just that in what was almost a carbon copy display.

North End took the lead after only seven minutes when Graham Bell's shot was deflected into the path of Gordon Coleman. He seemed certain to score when he was brought down by Millwall 'keeper Peter Gleasure. He was lucky not to be sent-off after the new instruction to referees about professional fouls but ended up picking the ball out of the net following ELLIOTT's well struck penalty.

Millwall hit back and Dean Neal had a 'goal' disallowed for a foul on Litchfield and the Lion's capture from Barnsley Trevor Aylott headed inches wide. At the other end, Elliott and McAteer went close to extending Preston's lead before ELLIOTT scored his second goal after 31 minutes, following up after Gleasure had failed to hold an O'Riordan shot.

As the first-half drew to a close, Massey and Aylott wasted chances for the visitors, whilst Litchfield saved well from West.

Early in the second-half, Millwall had the chance of reducing the arrears when Chatterton was brought down by Litchfield. The Millwall midfielder took the spot-kick himself but shot straight at the 'keeper. CHATTERTON made amends on 54 minutes when he scored with a shot-cum-cross after being put clear by Alan West. The Lions twice went close to drawing level but both Neal and Massey headed wide

from West's centres. Naughton brought a fine save out of Gleasure before putting in ELLIOTT. The North End striker cracked a fierce shot past the Millwall 'keeper who seemed rooted to the spot. Elliott almost netted a fourth goal minutes later and Bell shot narrowly wide as North End went in search of further goals.

Millwall manager Peter Anderson sent on Dean Horrix for Massey and he was soon in the thick of the action, creating chances for Neal and Chatterton. Millwall continued to push forward and after O'Riordan had failed to head away a through ball, NEAL scored with a long range shot. Litchfield was able to block a shot and then save a second effort after the Millwall player had only the 'keeper to beat.

What the papers said:

Norman Shakeshaft wrote: 'The thousands of ex-Preston soccer fans who now prefer to watch TV would have been surprised if they had seen North End's 3-2 win over Millwall at Deepdale. They say football is not as entertaining as it used to be and blamed modern defensive tactics. But in 34 years of regularly watching and 19 of reporting Preston's matches, I cannot recall more scoring chances being created in a fist game of a new league season.'

Elliott hits the target yet again. He finished the 1982-83 Season as North End's leading scorer once again with 23 goals. North End again finished mid-table.

Scunthorpe United v Preston North End

Tuesday 27th December 1983

Botham blues as North End run riot!

Final Score	**Scunthorpe United 1 Preston North End 5**
Venue	Old Show Ground
Scorers	**Scunthorpe United:** (Cammack) **PNE:** (Elliott 3; Houghton; Kelly)
Attendance	3,986
Referee	G. Napthine (Loughborough)
Line-ups	**Scunthorpe United:** Neenan; Longden; Poynton; Hunter; Green; Matthews; Cowling (Brolly); Cammack; Botham; Lester; O'Berg; **PNE:** Litchfield; Hinnigan; McAteer (Houston); D. Jones; Booth; Farrelly; Kelly; Walsh; Elliott; Naughton; Houghton;

Having been beaten 1-0 by Scunthorpe United in the first round of the FA Cup, North End returned to the Old Show Ground in the hope of gaining some revenge.

Former North End manager Gordon Lee had pinned his faith on Peter Houghton after signing him from Wigan Athletic to partner Steve Elliott in attack. Unfortunately for Lee, the two hadn't developed an understanding when the two sides met in the FA Cup or else he may still have been in charge. But in this game, the understanding was complete and they proceeded to tear Scunthorpe apart.

England all-rounder Ian Botham lined-up at centre-half for the home side despite it being on the eve of the cricket team's winter tour!

Early in the game, North End's McAteer was booked for a foul on O'Berg and shortly afterwards, Botham had his name taken by the referee for a tackle on Elliott. North End had the better of the early exchanges and after coming close on a couple of occasions they took the lead after 37 minutes. Houghton collected the ball on the left, slipped it across to ELLIOTT who drove it high into the roof of the net. There is no doubt that Preston deserved their half-time lead, a lead they extended after just five minutes of the second-half.

Botham failed to control a through ball from Naughton, Houghton pouncing to play in ELLIOTT who beat Neenan from 10 yards for both his and Preston's second goal. North End went 3-0 up on the hour-mark when the Scunthorpe 'keeper dropped a Willie Naughton centre and HOUGHTON was left with the simple task of tapping home from close range. Ten minutes later, ELLIOTT completed his hat-trick when he ran on to a headed pass from Mike Farrelly and scored with a superb left-foot shot that gave Joe Neenan no chance whatsoever.

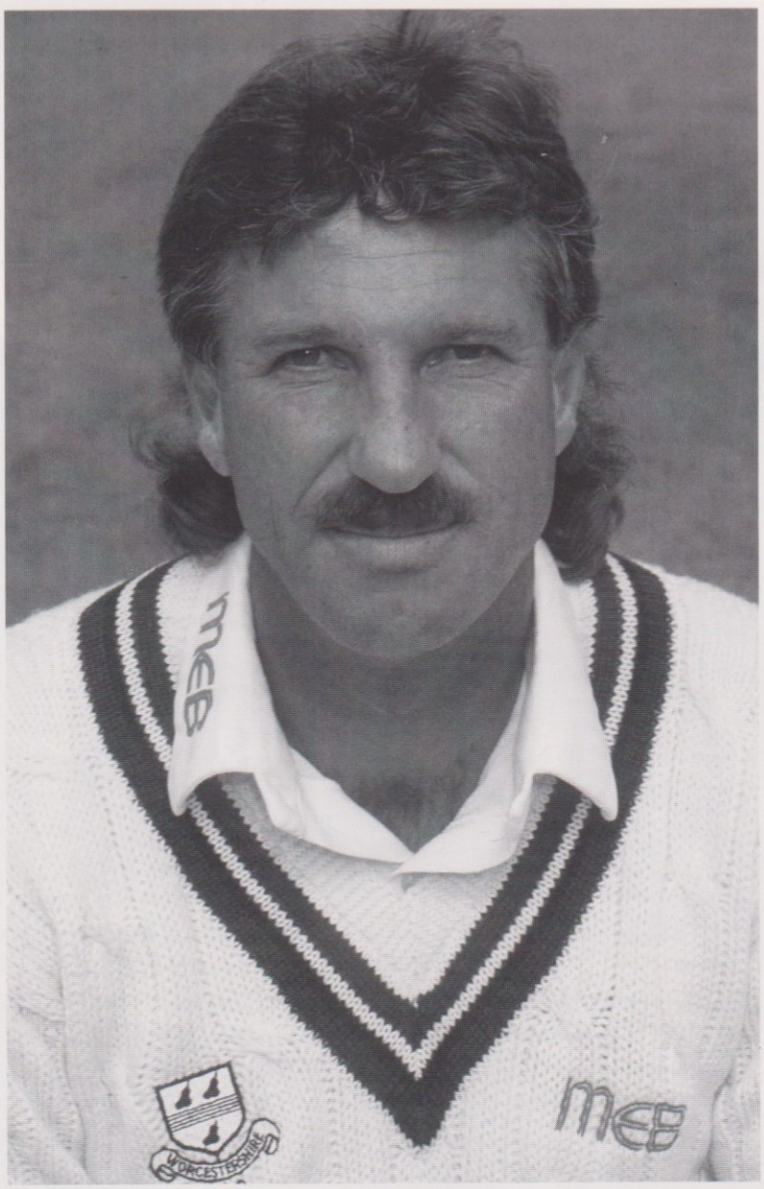
Though the game was virtually all over, North End weren't content and pushed forward in search of a fifth goal. It came after 82 minutes when John KELLY scored his tenth goal of the season with a diving header from a pin-point cross by Houghton.

Two minutes afterwards, Scunthorpe pulled a goal back when Steve CAMMACK headed home a Paul O'Berg cross. In the closing stages, Houghton and Elliott both went close to adding to their tally but though there was no further scoring, there was little doubt that Preston's fans had been given a glorious Christmas present.

Scunthorpe, who had won only one of five league games since beating Preston in the Cup were third from bottom, whilst North End moved to mid-table following such a fine result.

What the papers said:

Norman Shakeshaft writing in the Evening Post said: 'Perhaps England all-rounder Ian Botham should stick to cricket. After all he was nearly hit for six by Preston's footballers at the Old Show Ground. Botham played in the Third Division game yesterday in defiance of the TCCB but he could do little to stop Preston avenging the recent FA Cup first round 1-0 defeat. In fact, he contributed to North End's win by making a mistake which led to a crucial goal.'



With hindsight, this game is more likely to go down in the history books as it was one of the few times legendary cricketer Ian Botham played for the Iron.

Plymouth Argyle v Preston North End

Saturday 29th September 1984

Refereeing decisions cost Whites three points

Final Score	**Plymouth Argyle 6 Preston North End 4**
Venue	Home Park
Scorers	**Plymouth Argyle:** (Tynan; Hodges 2; Coughlin; Staniforth; English)
	PNE: (Clark 2; Kelly 2, 1 pen)
Attendance	4,258
Referee	R. E. Groves (Weston-super-Mare)
Line-ups	**Plymouth Argyle:** Philp; Nisbet; Rowe (English); Harrison; Goodyear; Burrows; Hodges; Rogers; Tynan; Staniforth; Coughlin;
	PNE: Litchfield; M. Jones; Rudge; Twentyman; Booth; Clark; Kelly; Farrelly; Houghton; Naughton; Houston; sub; Wilkins;

The 1984-85 season was to be another dark year in the history of Preston North End Football Club, but along the way they were certainly not helped by some of the officials' decision making and this game at Home Park was a prime example.

North End had made quite an encouraging start to the campaign, winning four of their first six league games as well as progressing to the second round of the League Cup prior to this clash. However, after the result at Home Park, North End wouldn't win again for ten games, conceding three goals or more six times. This was an astonishing game in its own right but the opening quarter-of-an-hour gave no indication of the remarkable events that were to follow.

On an afternoon of thrills and spills, the home side took the lead after 16 minutes when Tommy TYNAN stooped low to head home Coughlin's cross. North End drew level in the 37th minute when Jonathan CLARK unleashed an unstoppable 30-yard drive into the top right-hand corner of Dave Philp's goal. Just before half-time, John KELLY nipped in to put North End 2-1 ahead after a defensive mix-up in the Argyle six-yard box.

North End extended their lead soon after the interval when CLARK netted with a cracking volley from the edge of the box and it looked all over, Plymouth brought on substitute Tommy English and within a couple of minutes of his arrival, Argyle had reduced the arrears when Kevin HODGES netted from close range.

Just after the hour mark came the incident which turned the game. Clark, the scorer of two of North End's goals was sent-off for dissent after the referee had awarded Argyle a free-kick. Almost before Clark had left the field, the home side drew level with a goal from Russell COUGHLIN. Spurred on by the fightback, the Pilgrims pushed forward in search of a winner but it was North End who took the lead in the 85th minute. Willie Naughton was brought crashing to the ground by Argyle 'keeper Dave Philp and KELLY made no mistake with the resultant penalty.

The Preston fans who had made the long journey to Devon were chanting their delight, knowing that their side only had four minutes to hold out for a win that would put them amongst the Third Division's promotion contenders.

That four minutes was perhaps the most incident packed of the entire season and by the end of the game there had been a change in fortune that was to effect North End for the whole season. Plymouth were awarded a rather dubious penalty when English appeared to 'dive' and Gordon STANIFORTH levelled from the spot. Tommy Booth was still incensed and he too was given his marching orders after a second bookable offence. Nine men North End couldn't stand the strain and two goals in the last two minutes from HODGES and ENGLISH secured the points for Plymouth.

What the papers said:

In his first season as chief North End reporter Paul Agnew wrote: 'No-one appeared to know quite what to say or what to do. Everyone stood around shaking their heads in what can only be described as stunned amazement. The final whistle had just blown on the most incredible match I have ever seen. The action-packed clash had included 10 goals, two penalties, a couple of sendings-off and almost everything else a game can produce. It bordered on the unbelievable and not one player, official or spectator could really offer a satisfactory explanation of what they had witnessed.'

Clark put North End 3-1 ahead and all looked rosey for the whites. The referee had other ideas and played a vital part in the game, reducing the team to nine men.

Preston North End v Wolverhampton Wanderers

Saturday 13th May 1989

North End's late, late show

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Wolverhampton Wanderers 3**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Ellis 2; Patterson) **Wolverhampton Wanderers:** (Mutch 2; Bellamy)
Attendance	14,126
Referee	D. Phillips (Barnsley)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; N. Williams; Swann; Atkins; Wrightson; Hughes; Mooney; Ellis; Joyce; Jemson (Philliskirk); Patterson; sub not used Miller; **Wolverhampton Wanderers:** Kendall; Bellamy; Thompson; Streete; Robertson; Vaughan; Gooding; Downing; Bull; Mutch; Dennison; subs; Chard and Robinson

Visitors Wolverhampton Wanderers had already clinched the Third Division Championship and North End were assured of a place in the play-offs but the Whites went into the fixture determined to wipe out the memory of a 6-0 trouncing at Molineux back in November. With the pressure off and the chase for points insignificant, Deepdale's best league attendance for more than two years witnessed a most memorable game.

The game was only minutes old when Nigel Jemson sent a header inches wide of the target following a flowing move instigated by Brian Mooney and Warren Joyce. At the other end, Keith Downing was desperately unlucky to see his close range shot bounce to safety after hitting the inside of David Brown's right-hand post.

North End took the lead on 22 minutes when Neil Williams' cross from the right was met first time by Tony ELLIS, his powerfully struck volley rifling into the roof of Mark Kendall's goal. Slack marking in the North End defence five minutes later, allowed Andy MUTCH to wriggle free and slot the ball past Brown. It was certainly end to end stuff with Mark Patterson flashing a 25-yard shot inches past Kendall's left-hand post and Jeff Wrightson performing a miraculous goal-line clearance to deny the predatory Andy Mutch.

Early in the second-half, Tony Ellis was twice close to putting the Whites back in front but on each occasion, he was denied by the ever-alert Kendall in the Wolves' goal. Despite having most of the play in the early stages of the second-half, North End went behind when Bob Atkins lost possession on the halfway line and Steve Bull sent a measured pass into the path of MUTCH who scored his and the visitors second goal.

With just over twenty minutes to play, Wolves extended their lead. Robbie Dennison swung over a left-wing corner. Brown came and missed and Gary BELLAMY rose unchallenged to head home his first goal of the season.

North End were far from finished and Williams saw his shot cleared off the line with Kendall beaten. Gary Swann's cross-cum-shot ended up on the roof of the net before the Whites produced an amazing late finale.

Tony ELLIS reduced the arrears two minutes from time, tapping in from six yards after Mark Patterson had pulled the ball back from the by-line. Then in the last minute, PATTERSON turned goalscorer, cutting in from the left-wing

What the papers said:

Paul Agnew in his Evening Post column wrote: 'They don't come any better than this - what a heartstopper! Pure theatre, the best game seen at Deepdale in years and another marvellous result for rejuvenated Preston North End. A third double inside a week and a feast of goals, thrills and spills galore and the sort of entertainment to get spectators at fever pitch.'

Brentford scrape a third despite 'keeper Tunk's best efforts.

The Brentford defence failed to cope with North End's rampant forward line.

Aldershot v Preston North End

Saturday 3rd May 1986

Last game defeat in season of disasters

Final Score	**Aldershot 4 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Recreation Ground
Scorers	**Aldershot:** (McMenemy 2; Barnes; Fadida)
	PNE: (-)
Attendance	1,866
Referee	M. Scott (Nottingham)
Line-ups	**Aldershot:** Lunn; Blankley; Shrubb; Mazzon; Smith; Coleman; Barnes; Fadida; McMenemy; Massey; McDonald; sub: Ferns
	PNE: Kelly; McNeil; McAteer; Pilling; Welsh; Martin (Jemson); Foster; Gray; Thomas; Greenwood; Ibbotson;

In a season in which it was thought North End would begin the long road back from oblivion, the club endured the worst season in its history. Only the failings of Torquay United saved the Whites from finishing at the foot of the Fourth Division. Having to apply for re-election to the Football League was the final shame for the first winners of the League.

Sadly, North End looked every bit a team who were second from bottom of the League's basement as Aldershot tore the Deepdale club's defence to shreds, thanks particularly to the skills of Barnes and Fadida.

The first-half was like a typical end of season game with very few chances created. Aldershot's Giorgie Mazzon and Aharon Fadida both missed fine opportunities but at the other end, Preston forced only one corner and never even tested Shots' 'keeper Grant Lunn!

Two minutes after the interval, a slip by McNeil allowed Ian McDonald a free header but the Aldershot winger headed straight into the hands of Alan Kelly. The game came to life in the 57th minute when Paul McMENEMY waltzed through the North End defence before beating Alan Kelly with a close range shot.

Kelly, the son of Preston's 1964 FA Cup Final goalkeeper, looked completely out of his depth, although to be fair to him, the North End defence never looked like coping with Aldershot.

Barry Blankley sent in an unstoppable 35-yard drive that crashed against the bar in the 65th minute but two minutes later, BARNES scored Aldershot's second goal - his eighth since signing from West Ham less than a month before. The goal came just seconds after North End had missed their only chance of the game.

Aldershot 'keeper Lunn saved superbly from John Thomas' close range shot after the North End striker had been set up by Foster.

Two minutes after Bobby Barnes' goal, Aldershot went further ahead. Andy Massey's through ball split the North End defence and found McMENEMY who scored his second goal of the game.

There was just quarter-of-an-hour to go when FADIDA scored his fourth goal in only five appearances. He tucked the ball home in a goalmouth scramble after Barnes had been brought down by Kelly.

Even then Aldershot never eased up and Fadida missed two great chances towards the end of the game before Mazzon had a shot kicked off the line in the dying seconds with Kelly beaten.

The North End fans supported the team to the bitter end, still singing and chanting for their side, who threw their shirts to the Preston faithful.

Preston North End v Swansea City

Saturday 30th August 1986

Plastic Fantastic! party

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Swansea City 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thomas; Williams)
	Swansea City: (McCarthy)
Attendance	4,362
Referee	D. Hedges (Oxford)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; Bulmer; McAteer; Chapman; Jones; Allardyce; Williams; Clark; Thomas; Hildersley; Brazil; sub Atkins;
	Swansea City: Hughes; Harrison; Phelan; Lewis; Melville; Emmanuel; Hough; Randell(McCarthy); Love; Pascoe; Andrews;

A new era, a new manager, new signings, new optimism, a new pitch! Plastic had arrived at Deepdale in the form of a new pitch which was soon to take its place in the distinguished history of Preston North End Football Club.

The first league game to be played at Deepdale on a plastic pitch under John McGrath's management saw a crowd of 4,362 - the highest outside the Second Division - turn up to see the beginning of the new era. This was well up on the latter end of the re-election season and this attendance would steadily grow throughout the campaign which began to restore the pride of the great club and town.

North End adapted well to the new surface with its 'true' bounce and it was also fitting that the outstanding player of the previous season - John Thomas - would be the first to score on the plastic pitch. Thomas had already registered his first for the season with a goal on the opening day at Tranmere but this goal was more memorable. With an element of good luck, after it appeared he controlled the ball with his hand, THOMAS took the ball from an Andy McAteer free-kick and struck a superb volley past Hughes in the Swans' goal just after the half-hour mark.

The visitors hit back with David Brown making a couple of important saves before David Hough hit his own player when side-footing goalwards from only six yards out.

Hildersley and Williams were the inspiration behind North End's surging attacks and when the latter pulled the ball back, Hildersley thumped a first time volley against the crossbar. The bar was still shaking as John Thomas saw his rebound effort charged down by three desperate Welsh defenders.

In the second-half the crowd were again in raptures when North End scored a classic second goal.

McAteer made a deliberate surge down the right before delivering a cross for Oshor WILLIAMS to thunder a header into the net at the Fulwood End, a deserved goal to cap an outstanding individual performance by the new man.

Swansea staged a late fightback, although it was too little too late when Sean McCARTHY stole in to beat David Brown with a close range header just seconds before the final whistle - which greeted the North End players with a standing ovation.

It really was a new era at Deepdale and with John McGrath now in charge, the team was going in the right direction and this was the first of a number of memorable matches in what was a memorable season.

Preston North End v Halifax Town

Tuesday 16th September 1986

Thomas sparks amazing comeback

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Halifax Town 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thomas 3)
	Halifax Town: (Knill; Longhurst)
Attendance	5,259
Referee	G. Tyson (Sunderland)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; Bennett; McAteer; Chapman; Jones; Allardyce; Williams; Clark; Thomas; Hildersley; Brazil; sub; Atkins;
	Halifax Town: Roche; Brown; Robinson (Nicholson); Shaw; Knill; Galloway; Sanderson; Thornber; Diamond; Longhurst; Black;

By the end of the night, North End were sitting proudly on top of the Fourth Division and celebrating a real rejuvenation in fortunes since the previous year. It was all down to a one-man show in the last 22 minutes by John Thomas.

North End were unbeaten in League and Cup and were full of confidence as Halifax, pointless away from The Shay, arrived at Deepdale.

Yet defensively, North End looked decidedly shaky early on and the Yorkshire side rocked North End with a goal after eight minutes, Alan KNILL heading home Paul Sanderson's corner.Six minutes later they made it two when David LONGHURST, who tragically died on the pitch playing for York a few years later, took the ball just inside the Kop half and ran towards goal before unleashing a powerful shot past Brown.

Halifax continued to have the better of the first-half and Alan Knill almost netted a second goal but Oshor Williams scrambled the ball off the line with Brown beaten. North End managed only one on-target effort in the first-half when Oshor Williams' shot was held by the veteran 'keeper Paddy Roche.

Midway through the second-half and with still no goals, the crowd were beginning to grow restless and it seemed unlikely that North End were going to maintain their unbeaten record, let alone win the game and move top of the table. But John Thomas' never-say-die attitude proved the catalyst in an astonishing comeback.

On 68 minutes, Ronnie Hildersley was fouled on the left-hand side but he picked himself up to curl the free-kick over the wall where THOMAS ghosted in to glance a superb header in off the right-hand post and bring the crowd to life.

The equaliser came on 81 minutes after a period of constant pressure from North End. Gary Brazil this time delivered an inviting cross and THOMAS dived at full stretch to head home past Roche.

North End were now in complete ascendancy and with just four minutes left, it was THOMAS again amidst an electric atmosphere, who volleyed home after Sam Allardyce had rose highest to win a header in the box.

Only a week before, the North End directors had turned down a transfer bid for Thomas! The North End striker clutched the matchball proudly to his chest at the end of the game and as the Whites sat proudly on the top of the table, the fans finally believed that the team were back in the big time.

Preston North End v Chorley

Tuesday 9th December 1986

Thomas treble shatters Magpies' Cup dreams

Final Score	**Preston North End 5 Chorley 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Thomas, 1 pen, 3; Williams; Brazil)
	Chorley: (-)
Attendance	16,308
Referee	D. Allison (Lancaster)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; Clark; Bennett; Atkins; Jones; Allardyce; Williams; Brazil; Thomas; Swann; Hildersley; subs; Saunders and McAteer; **Chorley:** Senior; Scott; Hughes; Webster; Roberts; Cooper; Phillips (Liptrott); Marsden; Edwards; Moss; Nichol; sub not used Lloyd;

Chorley arrived at Deepdale with their hopes high. They had already beaten Wolves and held North End to an exciting goalless draw at Ewood Park where the first match was played, proving that they would be no pushovers.

Yet within three minutes, North End had opened the scoring. Jonathan Clark's headed interception sent John THOMAS racing clear of the Chorley defence and his hard, low shot into the bottom corner of the net left Magpies' 'keeper Ian Senior grasping at the night air.

North End pushed forward at every opportunity, with Sam Allardyce sending a powerful header inches wide of the post and Oshor Williams forcing Senior to turn his shot round the post. North End's second goal after 32 minutes was a carbon copy of their first. Webster lost possession in midfield and THOMAS took the ball in his stride, before rifling home another unstoppable shot.

Chorley's only chance of the entire match came after 37 minutes when skipper Phil Marsden's header was tipped over by David Brown from just under the bar.

Swann and Hildersley went close in the minutes shortly before half-time but the Magpies' defence held out.

Just after the interval, Gary Brazil had a 'goal' disallowed for an elbowing offence and though Chorley threw substitute Dave Liptrott on for Phillips in a last gasp bid, there was no stopping a rampant North End side. The Whites extended their lead on 58 minutes when Ronnie Hildersley was upended in the area by Wayne Roberts and the referee awarded a penalty. THOMAS duly completed his hat-trick from the spot. Oshor Williams the North End skipper missed an open goal, scooping the ball over the bar from only five yards out and Gary Swann came close wit a left-foot shot from the edge of the area. Shortly afterwards, Swann sent in a delicate cross that WILLIAMS met on the run, sending a looping header high into Senior's top right-hand corner.

The Whites were still not finished and with just under quarter-of-an-hour to go, Gary BRAZIL scored a stunning fifth goal. Thomas made ground down the left and sent over a cross to the far post where the North End No.8 volleyed home.

Chorley won a lot of friends by their attitude and their FA Cup run would be talked about for years to come. There was a lovely touch at the end of the game when both sets of players applauded the crowd and both sets of supporters cheered the two teams.

Preston North End v Northampton Town

Friday 3rd April 1987

Kelly's heroics foil table-topping Cobblers

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Northampton Town 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Brazil)
	Northampton Town: (-)
Attendance	16,456
Referee	C. Seal (Billingham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Kelly; McNeill; Bennett; Atkins; Jones; Zelem; Chapman; Swann; Thomas; Brazil; Williams; sub; Worthington;
	Northampton Town: Gleasure; Reed; Chard; Donald; Wilcox; McPherson; McGoldrick; Benjamin; Gilbert; Henry; Hill; sub; Morley;

Deepdale prepared for its hottest soccer night for years, a table-topping clash with mighty Northampton. It was a match Preston had to win if they were to have any chance of catching the runaway leaders.

In what was a carnival atmosphere, the kick-off had to be delayed for over ten minutes while the police made sure everyone got into the ground! North End soon showed that they meant business and opened the scoring in their first real attack of the game. Seven minutes had gone when Alex Jones from deep in his own half, sent a looping through ball that put Gary BRAZIL clear of the Northampton defence. As Cobblers' 'keeper Peter Gleasure came out to try and retrieve the situation, the North End striker kept his cool and hit a right-foot shot hard and low into the corner of the net.

Ten minutes later, the League leaders could have been 2-0 down when Brazil found himself clear again in similar circumstances. This time, the lively striker was denied by Gleasure's fingertips. It was now all North End and at the halfway stage of the first-half, the Northampton 'keeper pulled off a marvellous save to keep out Oshor Williams' delicate chip.

Just before the interval, John Thomas was booked for a wild challenge on Gleasure, whilst Northampton midfielder Donald had his name taken for dissent.

Determined not to go down without a fight, Northampton stepped up a gear at the start of the second-half. Adapting well to the plastic, Henry had a 'goal' disallowed for handball, whilst Hill saw a back header scrape a post. Playing some neat, controlled football, the visitors began to show why they were running away with the division.

Yet on 62 minutes, North End could easily have extended their lead. Brazil, who was prepared to shoot from anywhere, brought the best out of Gleasure but as the ball came out, Williams' first time effort struck an upright and bounced to safety.

Minutes later, 18-year-old North End 'keeper Alan Kelly made an incredible double save from the League's leading scorer, Richard Hill. The Northampton striker spotted Kelly off his line and tried a shot from fully 30 yards. The young 'keeper took off and turned the ball against the bar before gathering the rebound safely as two Northampton forwards converged on him. Ian Benjamin also brought a marvellous save out of Kelly, the North End 'keeper twisting in mid-air to keep out the goalbound shot. Kelly was far from finished and late in the game he made good saves from both Henry and Hill.

With just four minutes left, John Thomas looked certain to score North End's second goal. Brazil sent over a pin-point cross but Thomas from inside the six-yard box failed to make proper contact and his weak header went wide.

The final whistle was greeted by an almighty cheer for after all, North End had matched and beaten the best side in division four.

Leyton Orient v Preston North End

Saturday 25th April 1987

Chapman goal clinches promotion

Final Score	**Orient 1 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Brisbane Road
Scorers	**Orient:** (Cornwell, 1 pen)
	PNE: (Brazil; Chapman)
Attendance	5,255
Referee	B. Stephens (Stonehouse)
Line-ups	**Orient:** Cass; Cunningham; Hales (Juryeff); Smalley; Howard; Cornwell; Hughton; Brooks; Jones; Godfrey; Comfort;
	PNE: Kelly; Mller; Bennett; Atkins; Jones; Allardyce; Chapman; Swann; Thomas; Brazil; Williams; sub; Worthington;

Just two years previously, Preston North End found themselves tumbling into the Fourth Division and the May before they had to apply for re-election to the Football League for the first time in their history. Those seasons of misery were instantly forgotten at Brisbane Road, as the Whites went in search of promotion to Division Three.

North End's fans who once again brought a rival a club its best gate of the season, were cheering as early as the fifth minute. Bob Atkins pumped forward a long free-kick into the Orient box where big Sam Allardyce got a vital flick on and there was Gary BRAZIL at the far post to bundle home his 18th goal of the campaign. Orient were almost level within a matter of minutes but Brooks delayed his shot, allowing Mike Bennett to clear the danger. At the other end, John Thomas had a 'goal' disallowed for offside and Gary Swann shot inches wide of David Cass's left-hand post.

In fact, chances came thick and fast at both ends before the home side were awarded a penalty after 33 minutes. Orient dangerman Alan Comfort raced clear into the North End box when David Miller's clumsy challenge resulted in the winger getting his legs whipped from under him. Sam Allardyce was booked for protesting before John CORNWELL stepped up to send Alan Kelly the wrong way.

Williams and Thomas both had goalscoring opportunities before the interval but found Orient 'keeper Cass in excellent form.

The opening stages of the second-half saw North End forced to withstand some heavy pressure but with Atkins, Allardyce and Jones in fine form, they weathered the storm. Yet even when the home side did manage to get the better of the North End back four, Alan Kelly was largely restricted to the catching of crosses!

On 57 minutes, John Thomas had the ball in the Orient net again. He won the ball in a challenge on 'keeper David Cass but after walking the ball into the empty goal, the referee decided that the North End striker had been guilty of a foul.

The visitors continued to look dangerous on the break and Brazil missed a simple chance of putting his side into the lead after capitalising on a bad goal-kick.

Then with just eight minutes to play, Les CHAPMAN, making an absolute nonsense of his advancing years, found himself clear. He jinked one way, dummied inside a defender and then clipped a shot into the far bottom corner of David Cass' net.

By the time the final whistle arrived, North End fans had already started the celebrations. A pitch invasion followed and the songs rang out until John McGrath and his team made an appearance in the stand to take the much-deserved applause.

Preston North End v Colchester United

Saturday 9th May 1987

Farewell to the Fourth Division

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Colchester United 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Swann)
	Colchester United: (-)
Attendance	8,757
Referee	J. Key (Rotherham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Brown; Miller; Bennett; Atkins; Jones; Allardyce; Chapman; Swann; Thomas; Brazil; Hildersley; sub; Williams;
	Colchester United: Chamberlain; English; Norman; Wilkins; Day; Hedman; White; Adcock; Lowe; Hinshelwod; Reeves (Farrell);

There was no end of season relegation-promotion play-off tension or anxiety for the last match of the season. It was a day of back-slapping and hand-clapping, a time for mutual appreciation. An occasion to ponder and reflect on a marvellous nine months football and the best sequence of results in recent history.

As for the game itself, there was certainly never any danger of anyone fainting through too much excitement, mainly due to North End's lack of incentive and the visitors lack of enterprise!

After a fairly indifferent start, North End in the shape of John Thomas and Gary Brazil had a couple of goalscoring opportunities midway through the first-half but Colchester 'keeper Alec Chamberlain was equal to the task. David Miller also brought a fine save out of Chamberlain from fully 25 yards.

However, the clearest chance of he first-half fell to Colchester on 37 minutes. A rare mistake by Alex Jones allowed Tony Adcock to break free, he unselfishly rolled the ball into the path of Simon Lowe but with David Brown stranded out of his goal, he blasted the ball into the crowd when a chip would most surely have found the net. As the half wound to a close, Ronnie Hildersley was denied by a back-breaking save by Chamberlain and then an incredible scramble in the visitors' penalty area saw Bob Atkins, Gary Swann and John Thomas all denied by desperate last ditch tackles and bodies being flung in the path of the ball.

Early in the second-half, Colchester thought they had taken the lead but Tony Adcock's effort was cancelled out on the strength of a linesman's flag.

Hildersley and Chapman were running the midfield and the latter should have scored on 67 minutes but he shot hopelessly wide from a great position. That miss seemed to epitomise the game and it was a safe bet that neither side would manage a goal . resulting in Deepdale hosting its second successive goalless draw.

The referee had already looked at his watch when Gary Brazil made one last run down the left flank. His cross was perfect and Gary SWANN stooped low to head home a last gasp goal and clinch victory number 26 for the North End outfit. It certainly couldn't have worked out better had manager John McGrath put the script together!

Not surprisingly, the fans stayed behind long after the final whistle to salute their all-conquering heroes.

Sunderland v Preston North End

Monday 28th December 1987

Roker Park robbery!

Final Score	**Sunderland 1 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Roker Park
Scorers	**Sunderland:** (McPhail, 1 pen) **PNE:** (Jones)
Attendance	24,814
Referee	P. Vanes (Warley)
Line-ups	**Sunderland:** Hesford; Kay; Agboola; Bennett; McPhail; Owers; Lemon (Moore); Doyle (Gray); Bertschin; Gabbiadini; Armstrong; **PNE:** Kelly; Rathbone; Bennett; Atkins; Jones; Allardyce; Mooney; Swann; Ellis; Brazil; Hildersley; sub; Miller and Chapman;

After winning promotion the previous season, consolidation in the higher division was manager John McGrath's number one priority. After a bad start to the campaign, the Whites began to find their feet and though they beat local rivals Blackpool on Boxing Day, few gave them any chance of coming away with anything in their game at Sunderland, the Third Division leaders two days later.

North End were under the cosh from the word go, with the Wearsiders' striker Marco Gabbiadini twice coming close to finding the net. His 25-yard drive beat the diving Kelly but passed inches the wrong side of he post, whilst his powerful header from Armstrong's cross was well saved by the Preston 'keeper.

As the first-half wore on, the home fans became restless as Allardyce, Atkins and Jones thwarted wave after wave of Sunderland attacks. On the rare occasion that the North End back-line was breeched, the north-east side found Kelly in superb form, so much so, that the first-half ended goalless.

After the interval, North End had the wind at their backs and came into the game more as an attacking force. Prior to the game, Brian Mooney had been doubtful with a knee injury, but it was he who carved out two quick chances for his team-mates in the opening minutes of the second-half.

First, Gary Swann fired wide from a good position and then Tony Ellis was denied by the acrobatic skills of Sunderland 'keeper Iain Hesford.

North End were growing in confidence and their travelling army of fans began to chant 'We're going to score in a minute.' Their prophecy came true on 73 minutes as Gary Brazil swung over a left-wing cross that Gary Swann headed back across goal and Alex JONES up in support of his attack, slid in to squeeze the ball past Hesford, for his first goal of the season.

Sunderland made a double substitution to try and salvage a point. Kelly, whose handling throughout the game had been faultless, made a magnificent save to keep out a Gabbiadini drive and then dived bravely at the feet of the on-rushing Gray.

There were just four minutes left when Sam Allardyce hit a clearance across the face of his own goal, forcing 'keeper Alan Kelly to come racing out. Kelly then clashed with the Wearsiders' substitute Frank Gray on the edge of the penalty area but the referee ruled that the challenge had taken place inside the area and awarded a spot-kick. Former Blackpool defender John McPHAIL stepped up to send Kelly the wrong way.

Though the late blunder robbed North End of victory, they came so close to pulling off one of the season's shock scorelines.

Preston North End v Brentford

Saturday 4th March 1989

Bees stung in eight-goal thriller

Final Score	**Preston North End 5 Brentford 3**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Philliskirk; Patterson 1 pen; Joyce 2; Ellis)
	Brentford: (Ratcliffe; Bates; Godfrey)
Attendance	8,186
Referee	K. Breen (Liverpool)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Tunks; Williams; Rathbone; Jones; Wrightson; Atkins; Mooney; Ellis; Bogie; Philliskirk (Joyce); Patterson; sub not used Swann;
	Brentford: Roberts; Bates; Stanislaus; Millen; Evans; Ratcliffe; Jones; Sinton; Buttigieg (Smillie/Pearce); Cockram; Godfrey;

This game had all the ingredients for a cracker - North End having just beaten Chesterfield 6-0 and Gillingham 3-1 against FA Cup giantkillers Brentford, beaten only once in 18 games.

The game was less than two minutes old when Tony PHILLISKIRK fastened on to a through ball from Tony Ellis to shoot past Roberts. On three minutes, Ellis found Philliskirk again but after rounding the Brentford 'keeper, the North End striker saw his goalbound shot cleared off the line by Terry Evans who it seemed had appeared from nowhere!

Gradually, Brentford found their way back into the game and even without injured strikers Gary Blissett and Richard Cadette, looked comfortable on the plastic pitch. The Bees drew level after 10 minutes when the club's record signing Simon RATCLIFFE powered home a close range header from Bates' free-kick. Seven minutes later, the visitors took the lead when another set piece ended in BATES heading past Tunks after Allan Cockram's shot had smacked against the crossbar.

Midway through the first-half, North End drew level when Patterson crossed from the right. Philliskirk failed to make contact but Neil Williams followed up with a shot which Roger Stanislaus pushed out with his hands. Though not one of his best, PATTERSON scored from the resulting penalty - his third successful spot-kick of the week.

Within 28 seconds of the restart, Brentford regained the lead when GODFREY fired home an unstoppable shot which curled well out of Roy Tunks' reach. The Bees were playing some neat, controlled football and almost extended their lead on the hour mark when Cockram forced Tunks into making a fine save at the foot of his right-hand post. Four minutes later, Philliskirk had to be replaced by Joyce after suffering the effects of illness.

The North End substitute was to make an immediate impression for after getting himself booked, he levelled things up at 3-3. Brian Mooney and Mark Patterson combined to send JOYCE clear and as Roberts advanced, he placed a left-foot shot into the far corner.

On 76 minutes, the ground erupted as North End took the lead. Patterson beat the off-side trap and after two defenders failed to cut out his cross, Tony ELLIS blasted a left-foot drive into the bottom corner of Roberts' net. Ellis had the ball in the net again shortly afterwards but he was adjudged to have been offside.

The scoring was completed in the dying seconds of the game when Mooney beat two defenders before setting up Ellis. His cross to the near post was met by JOYCE sliding in ahead of the Bees' defence.

Not surprisingly, a standing ovation greeted the final whistle as the North End fans showed their appreciation.

What the papers said:

Paul Agnew was thoroughly disgusted with what he saw and certainly pulled no punches in Monday's Evening Post, he wrote: 'Spineless, gutless, heartless and perhaps worst of all, without any semblance of pride. Preston North End conceded their 100th league goal in this disgraceful exhibition against local rivals Wigan Athletic. But that alone was just another sorry statistic in a season of calamities. North End were supposedly fighting for survival - it looked nothing at all like that from the terraces, stands and Press Box - to be quite candid, this was a complete and utter shambles.'

Houghton scores a consolation second for North End,

Gary Brazil made only 17 appearances including this final home game. It was the absence of quality players, game after game, that ultimately led to relegation.

Preston North End v Wigan Athletic

Monday 6th May 1985

Sorry North End lay down and die

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Wigan Athletic 5**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (McAteer, pen; Houghton)
	Wigan Athletic: (Jewell; Butler; Barrow 2; Newell)
Attendance	4,875
Referee	R. Willis (Meadowfield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Campbell; M. Jones; McAteer; D. Jones; Atkins; Clark; Kelly; Farrelly; Houghton; Twentyman; Brazil; sub Johnson; **Wigan Athletic:** Tunks; Butler; Cribley; Kelly; Walsh; Methven; Lowe; Barrow; Bennett (Newell); Jewell; Langley;

Relegation to the Fourth Division for the very first time was all but a mathematical probability after this sorry defeat at the hands of Wigan Athletic. In the process, North End conceded their 100th goal of the campaign and didn't really deserve the two goals they managed to score in what was an easy win for the Latics.

Wigan looked sprightly from the off and current Latics' boss Paul Jewell missed a real sitter in the opening seconds, putting a half-volley wide of Glen Campbell's post, after a careless back-header by David Jones. It was a temporary let-off for the Whites however as JEWELL made amends for the miss on 23 minutes when he put a close range header past Campbell after a build-up involving Graham Barrow and Tony Kelly.

Four minutes from the break, ex-Wigan striker Peter Houghton was desperately unlucky when his left foot shot beat former Deepdale 'keeper Roy Tunks but struck an upright before bouncing out to safety.

The second-half opened with Latics' full-back John BUTLER taking full advantage of slackness in the North End defence to slip the ball past a bemused Glen Campbell.

North End then surprisingly mustered up some spirit and began a short fight back. Butler brought down Gary Brazil in the penalty area and Andy McATEER hammered home the spot-kick. Then on 66 minutes, North End were level as Brazil's precision right-wing cross was superbly met by HOUGHTON and right out of the blue, Preston were back in the game.

Their joy was short-lived for within two minutes, the visitors were back in front when an unmarked Graham BARROW headed home unchallenged to restore parity. Wigan then brought on a young Mike NEWELL and he duly added to the scoreline with a powerful effort from just inside the area. The rout continued when BARROW, Wigan's outstanding performer headed home his second goal from Paul Jewell's cross and poor Campbell was left to pick the ball out of the net yet again.

It could quite easily have been more had Campbell not made two heroic saves from Newell and David Lowe before the latter crashed a shot against the young 'keeper's left-hand post.

Somehow, Wigan managed to have both Butler and Lowe booked as they chalked up their best away win of the campaign and a second successive 5-2 win!

to send a hard, low shot past Kendall and inside the near post. This sent the North End fans wild with delight and one got the impression that had the game been extended for a further five minutes, then Preston might well have won!

What the papers said:

An ecstatic Paul Agnew in the Evening Post wrote: 'A game to do justice to the occasion, an occasion to relish ...and if anyone left Deepdale disappointed then he will never ever find satisfaction at a football match. Sunshine soccer with a smile, six goals to enjoy and a fightback no fiction writer could emulate. Both teams did a lap of honour and the cheering, which started three-quarters of an hour before the kick-off, was still reverberating around the famous old stadium long after five o'clock.'

Locally born Nigel Jemson went on to better things with Nottingham Forest. The 88-89 season is one he would want to forget as injury limited him to only a handful of appearences.

Preston North End v Burnley

Tuesday 19th February 1991

Jepson treble in Lancashire Hot Pot

Final Score	**Preston North End 6 Burnley 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Jepson 3; Shaw 2; Ashcroft) **Burnley:** (Bray)
Attendance	12,016
Referee	T. Fitzharris (Bolton)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Farnworth; James; Joyce (Eaves); Hughes; Flynn; Wrightson; Thompson; Harper; Jepson (Ashcroft); Shaw; Swann; **Burnley:** Williams; Measham; Deakin; Deary; Pender; Davis; Farrell; Francis; Eli (Bray); Jakub; Grewcock (White);

Though North End were struggling in the lower reaches of the old Third Division, this Leyland Daf Northern semi-final tie against neighbours Burnley, gave the fans a little light relief from the relegation dogfight. It also gave North End the chance to avenge their Sherpa Van Trophy semi-final defeat of three years earlier.

With North End having won only one of their previous nine league games and the Clarets pushing for promotion from the Fourth Division, Preston fans had little cause for optimism.

Yet with little over a minute played, North End took the lead. Burnley captain Ray Deakin misdirected a header back to his 'keeper and Dave Thompson recently acquired from Wigan, fastened on to the error and squared the ball for Graham SHAW to side-foot into an empty net. North End stormed forward in search of a second goal with both Harper and Swann going close. North End extended their lead on 25 minutes when Adrian Hughes' free-kick was cleared to the feet of Ronnie JEPSON. His wickedly deflected shot gave Williams no chance. Two minutes later, North End were 3-0 up. Jeff Wrightson's accurate ball from a free-kick saw JEPSON rise above John Pender to crash the ball into the roof of the net.

On 38 minutes, JEPSON completed a 13-minute hat-trick, lashing home a rising drive after Shaw had cut the ball back to him from the by-line. The former Port Vale centre-forward could have had a fourth goal two minutes later but it hardly seemed to matter as North End went in at half-time 4-0 up. Even before the half-time whistle had sounded, many of the visiting fans took their leave of the Town End!

Early in the second-half, Jepson turned provider, crossing hard and low from the left for SHAW to score his second goal of the game. Burnley substitute Ian BRAY netted a consolation goal for the Clarets before midway through the second-half, a knee injury forced hat-trick hero Jepson to be replaced. The striker who as making his home debut, went off to a tumultuous ovation.

His replacement, Lee ASHCROFT, didn't take long to get on the scoresheet, latching on to a through ball from Harper and though he was forced wide, he managed to find the net from an acute angle.

The Whites were just one two-legged match away from Wembley but sadly went out of the competition to Tranmere Rovers after losing the first leg at Prenton Park 4-0.

Blackpool v Preston North End

Saturday 10th October 1992

Hit-man Ellis destroys Seasiders

Final Score	**Blackpool 2 Preston North End 3**
Venue	Bloomfield Road
Scorers	**Blackpool:** (Sinclair; Briggs)
	PNE: (Ellis 3)
Attendance	7,631
Referee	B. Burns (Scarborough)
Line-ups	**Blackpool:** McIlhargey; Davies (Bonner); Murphy; Horner; Briggs; Gore; Rodwell; Sinclair; Stringfelliow (Bond); Gouck; Eyres;
	PNE: Farnworth; Davidson; Fowler (Kidd); Tinkler; Flynn; Callaghan; Ashcroft; Cartwright; Leonard; Ellis (Finney); James;

Prior to this local derby, you had to go all the way back to November 1991 for the last occasion when the visitors took away all three points from Bloomfield Road. Before the game, the Seasiders' incredible home record read: P. 41 W. 33 D. 7 L. 1 - a daunting task for North End.

Yet within three minutes, the Whites were ahead. Mike Flynn's long throw reached the six yard box and as Steve McIlhargey went for it with Mark Leonard, the ball cleared them both before bouncing kindly for Tony ELLIS to nod home. The Blackpool 'keeper wasn't having the best of games and eight minutes later, he made another mistake to gift North End a second goal. Aaron Callaghan's long free-kick found Leonard who laid the ball back to Ashcroft. The young winger completely wrong-footed Murphy before sending in a low sot which the Blackpool 'keeper got his body behind, but the ball somehow squirted lose and ELLIS was on hand to knock in his and Preston's second goal. After fifteen minutes, Ellis put Tinkler clean through and although the midfielder was upended by the advancing McIlhargey, the referee decided against awarding a penalty.

The home side then began to exert more pressure and Leonard back helping the defence had to head clear from under the bar. Midway through the first-half, Lee Fowler went off with a groin strain to be replaced by Ryan Kidd who was making his league debut.

Simon Farnworth was forced to race from his box to clear from Trevor Sinclair but in the resulting challenge, the Blackpool forward was left in a heap. The North End 'keeper was in danger of being sent-off but the referee produced only a yellow card. Farnworth made a tremendous save on 40 minutes, sticking out a foot to deny David Eyres, who had finally sprung North End's offside trap.

The referee had played almost six minutes of injury time at the end of the first-half when the Seasiders reduced the arrears. Eyres' pin-point cross found SINCLAIR who scored with a powerful diving header.

At the start of the second-half, Tony Ellis took a knock in the face. After lengthy treatment, the striker came round and was able to continue. From the restart, Tinkler got free on the right and crossed for ELLIS who though unsteady, steered his shot past McIlhargey to complete his hat-trick. On 50 minutes he could have had a fourth but McIlhargey turned his shot round the post. Lee Ashcroft could have sewn the game up but he side-footed wide from six yards out.

Blackpool continued to push forward. At the other end, a Flynn header clipped the outside of McIlhargey's left-hand post before slack marking in the North End defence allowed Gary BRIGGS to head home a David Eyres corner. Gouck almost levelled the scores in the final minute, flicking a header wide of an upright but North End hung on to win their first Bloomfield Road derby for 31 years.

Preston North End v Bradford City

Wednesday 25th November 1992

Nine goals in rip-roaring FA Cup clash

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Bradford City 5**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Graham; Ellis; Davidson; Callaghan)
	Bradford City: (McCarthy 2; Blake; Tinnion pen; Jewell)
Attendance	7,905
Referee	A. Dawson (Jarrow)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Farnworth; Cartwright; Davidson; Callaghan; Flynn; Fowler; Ashcroft; Graham; Allardyce (Tinkler); Ellis; James; sub; Finney
	Bradford City: Tomlinson; Heseltine; Williams; L. Duxbury; Blake; Hoyle; Jewell; Oliver; McCarthy; Tinnion; M. Duxbury; subs McHugh and Lowford;

Recent North End games had suggested things were getting tighter at the back and certainly they had improved since their 4-0 League thrashing at Valley Parade which preceded the temporary appointment as manager of Sam Allardyce. Sadly the fragile nature of North End's defence that day, returned in this game.

After just three minutes, City's big defender Noel Blake got his head to a left-wing corner, forcing Simon Farnworth into making a superb one-handed save. However, the ball wasn't cleared properly and Blake sent in another header looping over the keeper's head and onto the angle of the bar and post where McCARTHY forced the ball home from close range.

North End tried to hit back and after Lee Ashcroft had seen his 30-yard drive tipped over the bar by Tomlinson, Tony Ellis went close from a free-kick. It was Ellis who provided the cross from which Deiniol GRAHAM equalised after 34 minutes, turning the ball past an unsighted Tomlinson.

The Yorkshire soon recovered their lead when Tinnion's cross was headed home by BLAKE. On the stroke of half-time, Bantams' Paul Jewell tricked his way into the penalty area before being upended by Graham. The referee pointed to the spot and TINNION fired the penalty past Simon Farnworth's outstretched left-hand into the bottom corner.

The second-half was only a couple of minutes old when North End pulled a goal back. Tony ELLIS dribbled his way into the penalty area before firing under the advancing Tomlinson. Preston went all-out in search of an equaliser and it came after 63 minutes when full-back Jonathan DAVIDSON forced the ball home from the narrowest of angles.

The Whites came close to taking the lead but Lee Ashcroft missed the game's easiest chance from in front of an open goal and Mike Flynn headed against the outside of Tomlinson's right-hand post.

Bradford then went down the other end and against the run of play, took the lead. McCarthy's cross was chested down by Gavin Oliver and though Farnworth saved the inside-forward's shot, he couldn't hold the ball and JEWELL was left with a simple tap-in.

As North End attacked in search of the goal that would take the tie to extra-time, City's Oliver was sent-off for elbowing Graham in the face. Yet it was ten-men Bradford who scored the game's next goal, Tinnion beating the North End offside trap and passing the ball to McCARTHY who rolled it home from a suspiciously looking offside position.

More than a minute into stoppage time, Lee Ashcroft's free-kick was headed into the far corner of the net by Aaron CALLAGHAN but shortly afterwards, the full-time whistle went and North End had left it too late!

Bolton Wanderers v Preston North End

Saturday 8th May 1993

Down and Out

Final Score	**Bolton Wanderers 1 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Burnden Park
Scorers	**Bolton Wanderers:** (McGinlay pen)
	PNE: (-)
Attendance	21,720
Referee	J. Kirkby (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**Bolton Wanderers:** Branagan; Brown; Burke; Lee; Seagraves; Stubbs; Kelly; McAteer; Darby(Green); McGinlay; Patterson sub; Winstanley; **PNE:** Farnworth; Callaghan; Lucas; Whalley; Kidd; Greenall; Fowler (Watson); Ainsworth; Norbury; Burton; Leonard; sub; Holland;

The gulf between Preston North End and the better clubs in the Second Division had been illustrated a number of times during the course of the season but never in front of so many people. Victory for Bolton Wanderers at Burnden Park would secure promotion for the Trotters, whilst North End needed to win to have a hope of staying up.

Top-scorer Tony Ellis was missing as was Lee Ashcroft and with so many others crocked by the Deepdale plastic, it was always going to be Bolton's party unless Bruce Rioch's side managed to shoot themselves in the foot with promotion so close.

Yet after just 10 seconds, North End could have scored. Straight from the kick-off, Mickey Norbury flicked the ball on and Simon Burton was only just beaten to it by Wanderers' 'keeper Keith Branagan. A minute late, Lee Fowler's powerfully struck shot was well saved by Branagan and then Norbury found the 'keeper with a shot on the turn.

The home side eventually settled and former Bury winger David Lee wriggled through North End's defence on 10 minutes but Farnworth was quickly off his line to deny the Bolton flier. Farnworth then saved at point blank range from McAteer before getting down to hold headers from Alan Stubbs and Julian Darby. David Lee was having an outstanding game for the home side and should have opened the scoring in the 27th minute when he raced on to a lucky deflection and drew Farnworth before sliding his shot wide.

Towards the end of the half, Bolton were denied a couple of claims for a penalty as both Lee and McGinlay were on the receiving end of rather robust challenges.

Though North End reshuffled the pack to try and combat Lee, it didn't work as the Bolton winger had a shot charged down by Gareth Ainsworth, hit the top of the crossbar after being set up by Mark Patterson and then beat Farnworth only to see his shot blocked on the line by Colin Greenall.

The game was an hour old when North End brought on Liam Watson to replace Fowler and within a minute of him being on the pitch, he was put away down the left by Neil Whalley. Unfortunately, his attempted cross to the unmarked Norbury was too weak and Seagraves managed to clear the danger.

There was just quarter-of-an-hour remaining when Bolton got the goal they'd been threatening. David Lee got the ball on the right, cracked in a first time cross which appeared to strike Simon Burton on the arm and thigh together but the referee had no hesitation in pointing to the spot. Up stepped John McGINLAY to rifle it low past Simon Farnworth's right-hand - Bolton promoted, North End relegated!

Preston North End v Torquay United

Wednesday 18th May 1994

Last game on plastic sees North End reach Wembley

Final Score	**Preston North End 4 Torquay United 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Ellis; Moyes; Hicks; Raynor) **Torquay United:** (Goodridge)
Attendance	11,442
Referee	J. Worrall (Warrington)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Woods; Fensome; Kidd; Cartwright; Hicks; Moyes; Ainsworth; Whalley; Raynor (Lucas); Ellis (Challender); Bryson; sub; Berryman; **Torquay United:** Bayes; Hodges; O'Riordan (Foster); Kelly; Moore; Curran; Trollope; Buckle; Darby; Sale; Goodridge; subs; Hathaway and Lowe

North End manager John Beck deliberately wrote his players off before the dramatic play-off semi-final against Torquay by telling them they had no chance after losing the first leg at Plainmoor 2-0!

More than 11,000 flocked to Deepdale to see the final game played on plastic in Britain. But that historic event was overshadowed by a different landmark - North End's first trip to Wembley for 30 years.

The match which was an absolute thriller from start to finish, began rather ominously for the home side as Torquay's Barbadian winger, Goodridge, miskicked yards out with only Steve Woods to beat. Yet after just five minutes, North End got the early goal that fired a mood of optimism amongst the home fans when Tony ELLIS headed home through a crowded penalty area.

Though the Devon side were rattled they attacked in the hope of regaining their two-goal advantage. They were rewarded on 16 minutes when the dangerous Greg GOODRIDGE caught the North End defence square and slotted home his second goal of the tie.

Midway through the first-half, Neil Whalley almost put the Whites ahead on the night but his header hit the underside of the bar before Hodges cleared the danger.

The whole context of the match changed nine minutes from the end of the first-half when Torquay were reduced to ten men. The visitors' centre-half Darren Moore, scorer of Torquay's second goal in the first leg, received his marching orders from Joe Worrall for punching Paul Raynor. The game was in danger of boiling over and two minutes later, Stuart Hicks found his way into the referee's notebook.

Finding they had much more time and space on the ball, North End bombarded the Torquay goal with a succession of balls into the area and it was from one of Bryson's left-wing crosses that Captain Fantastic David MOYES headed the Whites into the lead on the stroke of half-time.

The second-half was only seven minutes old when HICKS who was a tower of strength at the

heart of the North End defence, met Raynor's corner to head past Bayes in the Torquay goal.

Torquay's player-manager Don O'Riordan, a former North Ender, took himself off on the hour mark to be replaced by Adam Foster. Though it seemed only a matter of time before United caved in, Foster headed agonisingly wide in injury-time but with the scores locked at 3-1, extra-time was needed.

Though both sides had chances to score, the winning goal came just four minutes from the end of extra-time when Paul RAYNOR headed home Andy Fensome's pin-point cross. Moments later, North End's hero had to be carried off with a combination of exhaustion and cramp!

Torquay 1-4 favourites to get to the final prior to the start of the match, appeared to have held on for a victory on the away goals rule until Raynor's dramatic winner.

What the papers said:

Chris Shaw writing in the Evening Post said: 'John Beck's comeback kings put the pride back into Preston with a display of true grit that deserved the price of a trip to Wembley. It was typical of an extraordinary game that the winning goal should come four minutes from the end of extra-time. And it was also fitting that Paul Raynor should be the scorer. It wasn't even the final dramatic twist to a plot that would have been rejected by Roy of the Rovers cartoonists for being far-fetched. Because moments after his sensational goal, he had to be carried off.'

Raynor on his way to scoring North End's fourth and final goal.

Farewell to the plastic - and the leggings!

Preston North End v Wycombe Wanderers

Saturday 28th May 1994

North End beaten with ruthless efficiency

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Wycombe Wanderers 4**
Venue	Wembley
Scorers	**PNE:** (Bryson; Raynor)
	Wycombe Wanderers: (Squires og; Garner; Carroll 2)
Attendance	40,109
Referee	K. Cooper (Pontypridd)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Woods; Fensome; Kidd; Cartwright; Squires; Moyes; Ainsworth; Whalley; Raynor; Ellis; Bryson; subs; Conroy; Lucas and Berryman;
	Wycombe Wanderers: Hyde; Cousins; Titterton; Crossley; Creaser; Ryan; Carroll; Thompson; Reid; Garner; Guppy; subs; Brown; Hemmings and Moussadik;

The match presented an interesting contrast, not just in confrontation between one of the Football League's founder members and its newest club, but also of styles.

North End's route - it having worked for manager John Beck at Cambridge United was largely aerial, set pieces seeing them at their most dangerous. Wycombe were more a ground force, as you might expect from their manager Martin O'Neill, who had gleaned much from his time as a player under Brian Clough.

In Wycombe's ranks was 34-year-old Simon Garner, a fearsome striker who posed the game's first threat for North End when after four minutes he cut in from the left and shot narrowly wide of the near post. A minute later, Thompson weaved his way in from the left and faced with a good goalscoring opportunity, shot into the side-netting with Steve Woods beaten. It was all one-way traffic and Garner's dummy set up Guppy who looked certain to score but somehow Woods diverted his shot away for a corner. Wycombe continued to push forward and on the quarter-of-an-hour mark, Thompson's full-blooded shot was charged down by Squires. A great through ball by Thompson landed perfectly for Carroll but Kidd did just enough to put him off, allowing Woods to gather.

Yet despite all this pressure, it was North End who took the lead after 32 minutes with a goal of superb quality. Andy Fensome's long throw was helped on by Ellis and Ian BRYSON scored with a 'bicycle' kick. With the North End fans still celebrating their goal, Wycombe came straight down the other end and drew level within 30 seconds when Thompson's shot was helped into his own net by SQUIRES.

There was more drama a few minutes later as North End regained the lead. Cartwright found Ellis on the left and his pin-point cross was met by Paul RAYNOR whose glancing header gave Wycombe 'keeper Paul Hyde no chance whatsoever.

Unfortunately for North End, Wycombe drew level almost straight after the restart when a long ball out of defence from Titterton found GARNER who lashed the ball past Woods.

On 57 minutes, Wycombe took the lead for the first time when a slip by Fensome let in Guppy. The winger found Garner whose first time pass found CARROLL who tucked the ball past Woods.

Shortly afterwards, a Guppy corner hit the bar and on 72 minutes, a second goal by CARROLL ended the contest. It was a most spectacular strike as the Wycombe forward allowed to run from the right-wing, cut inside and unleashed a powerful shot that entered the net off a post. Garner blotted his copybook three minutes later, when he was booked for kicking the ball away after being given offside - even then he put the ball in the net!

Ellis and Cartwright had late chances to reduce the arrears but it wasn't to be and Preston's biggest party in years was pooped by the new kids in the League.

Long after Wycombe's captain Glyn Creaser had lifted the Third Division Play-Off Cup, awarded for the first time, a large number of North End's supporters were still applauding both teams for providing an afternoon of rich entertainment at the end of a long, hard season.

What the papers said:

Chris Shaw in the Lancashire Evening Post wrote: 'Preston North End found Wembley "The Field of Dreams" to be a hard and painful learning ground. An no-one found the experience more testing than the youngest payer in the North End ranks, defender Jamie Squires. With only four League games to his name, Squires, 18, was plunged into the biggest game of this and many a year for Preston and sadly he discovered the Wycombe strikers held all the aces. He wasn't the only one who had to take disappointment on the chin. Too many North End players didn't perform when it mattered and to be frank, Wycombe's dominance bordered on the embarrassing at times.'

Ouch! They didn't even get a caution for this.

Preston North End v Doncaster Rovers

Saturday 4th March 1995

Beckham goal on debut but North End still playing catch-up

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Doncaster Rovers 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Davey; Beckham)
	Doncaster Rovers: (Jones; Wilcox)
Attendance	9,624
Referee	J. Watson (Whitley Bay)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Vaughan; Fensome; Sharp; Cartwright; Kidd; Moyes; Davey; Bryson; Lancashire (Smart); Conroy; Raynor (Beckham)
	Doncaster Rovers: Suckling; Kirby; Hackett; Brabin; Wilcox; Swales; Harper; Schofield; Jones; Norbury; Parrish; subs; Thew and Williams;

Although North End had only lost two of their last 14 games it would take something extra special, bearing in mind their poor start to the season, to make it to the play-offs. Manager Gary Peters brought in midfielders Simon Davey and David Beckham and both made their debuts against Doncaster Rovers though the 19-year-old Manchester United star was on the bench.

The all-action Davey came close to opening the scoring after six minutes but his volley struck a defender before bouncing to safety. The former Carlisle skipper then tried an overhead kick but it was easily saved by Doncaster's experienced 'keeper Perry Suckling. North End were unlucky not to be awarded a penalty on 16 minutes when Graham Lancashire appeared to be pulled down from behind by Rovers' skipper Russ Wilcox.

Yet it was the visitors who took the lead in the 35th minute. Gary Brabin's long ball down the left flank beat North End's offside trap and winger Sean Parrish had time to measure his cross which was headed home by Graeme JONES. The Rovers' striker who was later to make a name for himself with Wigan Athletic, earned himself a ticking off from the referee after contravening the latest FA directive, by stripping off his shirt.

Davey almost equalised with North End's last attack of the half, but his glancing header flashed just inches wide of an upright.

At half-time, the disappointing Paul Raynor was replaced by David Beckham and within two minutes of the restart, North End were level. Beckham laid the ball back to Andy Fensome whose long ball found Conroy; he flicked on a header to DAVEY who shrugged off two challenges before hammering a right-foot shot past Suckling.

The Yorkshire side went straight to the other end and almost took the lead, an Bryson heading off the line from a Chris Swales shot after a corner hadn't been cleared. Swales was in the thick of the action as North End mounted attack after attack, bravely heading behind for a corner as Davey and Conroy put him under pressure. The corner on the left was an inswinger from BECKHAM which swung all the way into the net at the far post past a startled Perry Suckling!

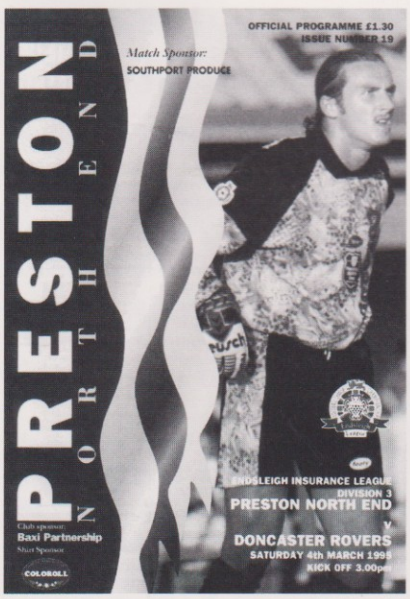
North End continued to push forward, Suckling saving well from Cartwright and Davey before Bryson saw his overhead kick land on top of the bar.

Doncaster looked dangerous on the break and it came as no real surprise when they drew level on 76 minutes, WILCOX heading home Parrish's corner.

In fact, Rovers could have taken all three points had it not been for North End 'keeper John Vaughan. After denying former Preston player Steve Harper, he produced a brilliant one-handed save to keep out a Graeme Jones effort. With the game in its final minute, John Schofield looked to have broken the deadlock but his header flashed inches wide and had it gone in, North End would have been the only team in the top-half of the table to have lost on the day!

What the papers said:

Brian Ellis in the Evening Post wrote: 'Playing catch-up is hard enough at normal speed but a darn sight more difficult when the race is being run at break-neck pace. And while North End have made good ground on the leading pack since Gary Peters took over the baton, they can't close the gap completely until someone slows down. As things stand, nobody is giving as much as an inch. On Saturday the entire top half of the table moved forward en bloc, meaning Preston's point against play-off rivals Doncaster was barely enough to preserve the status quo.'



Simon Davey celebrates his debut goal with some passion. The ironies of football are all too apparent - Davey forced to retire at 28 and the other debut boy, David Beckham, needs no further comment.

Bury v Preston North End

Wednesday 17th May 1995

Play-off heartbreak yet again

Final Score	**Bury 1 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Gigg Lane
Scorers	**Bury:** (Rigby)
	PNE: (-)
Attendance	9,094
Referee	J. Kirby (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**Bury:** G. Kelly; Woodward; Stanislaus; Daws; Lucketti; Jackson; T. Kelly; Carter (Paskin); Stant; Rigby; Pugh; subs; Hughes and Bracey;
	PNE: Vaughan; Fensome (Ainsworth); Fleming; Raynor; Kidd; Moyes; Davey; Bryson; Smart; Sale (Conroy); Cartwright;

Considering the turmoil throughout the season, from 16th to fifth in just 25 matches was a superhuman effort. But for too long, North End chased a dream, playing catch-up on the play-off places instead of getting on with all the fundamental changes necessary following the departure of John Beck.

Right from the outset, North End clung on to the belief that they could salvage the game from their 1-0 defeat in the first leg at Deepdale but Bury could have finished the job in the first few minutes of the second leg. The Shakers' leading scorer Phil Stant headed over the bar from point blank range with North End 'keeper John Vaughan out of position. In the 14th minute both Michael Jackson and David Pugh had shots blocked in a frantic goalmouth scramble but the longer the half went on, the more likely it seemed that North End would be the first side to score.

Simon Davey's shot was kicked off the line with Kelly beaten but a minute before half-time, the Bury 'keeper made a spectacular save from Ian Bryson's 25-yard volley.

Early in the second-half, Mike Conroy on as a substitute for Sale, missed a golden opportunity to put North End level on aggregate when after being put through by Cartwright, he shot straight at Gary Kelly. North End continued to push forward in search of the all-important goal and on 66 minutes, Ryan Kidd should have scored but he was caught napping on the far post when Bryson headed on a Paul Raynor centre. A minute later, Raynor's corner picked out Ian Bryson on the edge of the Bury penalty area. He powered in a header towards the top left-hand corner but Kelly flung himself across his goal and somehow scooped the ball out from under the crossbar.

With just twenty minutes to play, Preston manager Gary Peters made his second substitution, sending on Gareth Ainsworth for Andy Fensome. Playing just three at the back, North End were instructed to shoot on sight and though Smart and Bryson came close, the Shakers broke out of defensive mode to hit them on the break.

Bury substitute John Paskin switched play upfield and Tony RIGBY let fly with a dipping shot from 25 yards which beat 'keeper John Vaughan all ends up. Sadly, it was the only real piece of skill shown by either side on the night!

With Bury leading 2-0 on aggregate, winger Tony Kelly resorted to throwing punches after a nasty tackle. Not surprisingly he earned himself a red card, which meant he missed the Wembley final against Chesterfield.

Preston North End v Mansfield Town

Saturday 21st October 1995

Double hat-trick delight

Final Score	**Preston North End 6 Mansfield Town 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Saville 3; Wilkinson 3)
	Mansfield Town: (-)
Attendance	8,989
Referee	T. Helibron (Co. Durham)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Vaughan; Fensome; Barrick; Atkinson; Wilcox; Moyes; Davey (Kilbane); Bryson; Saville; Wilkinson; Cartwright; subs Kidd and Lancashire; **Mansfield Town:** Bowling; Boothroyd; Hackett; Doolan; Howarth; Peters; Ireland; Parkin; Harper (Eustace); Hadley; Kerr (Slawson); sub not used Trinder;

North End came into the game against fellow promotion contenders Mansfield Town on the back of just one defeat in the last twelve matches and just one win away from claiming top spot in Division Three. The Stags too were in good form, just one defeat in eleven games prior to this encounter and knocked in six goals on their last away trip at Wigan.

The visitors looked the livelier of the two sides in the first ten minutes but it was North End who took the lead after 13 minutes when Simon Davey played the ball up to the edge of the box where Saville flicked on a header to WILKINSON. The former Mansfield striker, playing against his old club for the first time, spun round to fire a fine shot out of the reach of the Stags' 'keeper Bowling.

After that, North End got hold of the game and both Bryson and Cartwright went close before on 34 minutes, Davey dispossessed Doolan, went round Hackett and played in Wilkinson. He got to the by-line and crossed the all to the far post where SAVILLE headed the ball into the bottom left-hand corner past Ian Bowling's outstretched left hand.

Five minutes later, Dean Barrick caught the Mansfield defence napping, his quick throw found Saville who laid the ball into the path of Steve WILKINSON who shot into the net off the inside of the far post.

Midway through the second-half, Mansfield defender Mark Peters was sent-off for a second bookable offence after scything down Graeme Atkinson as he threatened to break through.

Three minutes after his dismissal, North End went 4-0 up. Simon Davey was again involved, winning the ball in midfield before threading it through for SAVILLE. He rounded 'keeper Bowling before firing into the empty net. Simon Davey was having an outstanding game and on 76 minutes, he received the ball from Lee Cartwright before clipping in a cross to the far post where WILKINSON completed his hat-trick, heading home with power.

As the score increased, Mansfield were reduced to chasing shadows and during the latter stages of the game, North End looked likely to score with each attack.

The Whites' sixth and final goal came in the 84th minute when Wilkinson's cross from the right was met by the head of Andy SAVILLE who found the bottom left-hand corner of Bowling's net.

The visitors misery was complete in injury-time when assistant-manager Keith Alexander was ordered from the dug-out following remarks made to a linesman.

Leyton Orient v Preston North End

Saturday 20th April 1996

Saville 'double' seals promotion

Final Score	**Leyton Orient 0 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Brisbane Road
Scorers	**Leyton Orient:** (-)
	PNE: (Saville 2)
Attendance	5,170
Referee	F. Stretton (Nottingham)
Line-ups	**Leyton Orient:** Caldwell; Hendon; Austin (Baker); Chapman (Lakin); Arnott; McCarthy; Brooks; Cockerill; Berry; West; Kelly; sub; Warren;
	PNE: Vaughan; Sparrow; Barrick; Kilbane(Bennett); Wilcox; Moyes; Davey; Bryson; Saville; Wilkinson; Gage; subs; Lucas and Kidd;

In what was manager Gary Peters' first full season in charge, North End travelled to Leyton Orient, knowing that a win would secure their promotion to the Second Division.

On the very ground were North End clinched promotion nine years ago, they could have taken the lead after only two minutes play but Steve Wilkinson shot into the side-netting with only Orient 'keeper Peter Caldwell to beat. In fact, the Preston striker had a string of chances in the first-half that all went begging!

North End took the lead after 10 minutes when Kevin Kilbane took full advantage of a defensive mistake to set up the unmarked Wilkinson on the left of the penalty area. The young Orient 'keeper should have cut out his cross but he didn't and SAVILLE completely unmarked eight yards out, headed into an open goal.

Shortly afterwards, Wilkinson, who was set up by Saville, fired straight at Caldwell and then on 23 minutes, had only the 'keeper to beat but blazed over from six yards out. North End continued to dominate the first-half and skipper Ian Bryson had one shot parried before scooping the rebound over the bar. Kevin Kilbane hit a dipping volley from fully 25 yards but his effort flashed just wide of the far post.

On the stroke of half-time, Steve Wilkinson had yet another chance to open his account but he again shot straight at Caldwell.

During the early stages of the second-half, the home side piled on the pressure and were unlucky not to draw level. North End defender Russ Wilcox was lucky not to give away a penalty when he appeared to handle under the nose of the referee and Colin West's powerfully struck shot took a deflection off Sparrow and rolled conveniently to John Vaughan.

North End then recovered their composure and on the hour-mark, they extended their lead. Orient 'keeper Caldwell was hurried into kicking the ball clear by the ever-alert Bryson but he could only guide it out to SAVILLE. The North End striker calmly chipped into the unguarded net from 30 yards out while the home side's custodian was still scrambling to get back.

Saville, who had netted a hat-trick when North End beat Orient 4-0 at Deepdale earlier in the season, should have had another at Brisbane Road. In the 68th minute, a full blooded left-foot volley by the North End striker was brilliantly saved by Caldwell, who flung himself across his goal and turned the ball round the post.

After that, North End slowed the game down and won with plenty to spare as the fans scaled the perimeter fences ready to celebrate at the final whistle!

What the papers said:

Brian Ellis wrote: ' Some people are on the pitch....they think it's all over...its is really! And whatever the sums add up to, the few stattos pleading for calm were swallowed up by a frenzied promotion throng as Preston relived 1987 with another good old East End knees-up. Two goals from the iceman Andy Saville was enough to kick-off a party which began in Queen Vic country, carried on up the M1 and M6 and continued long into the night back in Lancashire.'

A double strike from Andy Saville secured North End three vital points and helped him towards his season's total of thirty League and Cup goals.

Hartlepool United v Preston North End

Saturday 27th April 1996

North End seal title glory

Final Score	**Hartlepool United 0 Preston North End 2**
Venue	Victoria Ground
Scorers	**Hartlepool United:** (-)
	PNE: (Davey; Saville)
Attendance	5,076
Referee	G. Cain (Bootle)
Line-ups	**Hartlepool United:** Jones; Ingram; McAuley; Henderson; McGuckin; Howard; Allon; Tait; Houchen; Halliday; Canham; subs; Lee; Billing and Conlon;
	PNE: Lucas; Sparrow; Barrick; Kilbane; Wilcox; Moyes; Davey; Bryson; Saville; Wilkinson; Gage; subs; Bennett; Kidd and Atkinson;

The Whites went to the north-east knowing they had to win and then hope Gillingham came unstuck at Fulham for the Championship to end up at Deepdale. Having won promotion at Orient, it was hoped that North End would be relaxed and uninhibited and though that wasn't the case, there were the occasional flashes of confidence which had destroyed the teams before the turn of the year.

Though it wasn't an easy surface on which to play the type of football North End had produced for the majority of the season, they delighted their supporters who outnumbered the home fans, with their play. An overnight illness to John Vaughan resulted in Young England 'keeper David Lucas making his North End debut.

North End almost went ahead as early as the sixth minute when Steve Wilkinson's shot went narrowly past the post with Jones beaten. A couple of minutes later, former Hartlepool player, Andy Saville saw his header brilliantly tipped over the bar by the home side's 'keeper, who was suffering from a gashed thigh sustained in a cycling accident. The Whites were in total control and shortly afterwards, Wilkinson chipped Jones only to see full-back Denny Ingram race back and clear. Kevin Gage then nutmegged Hartlepool left-back Sean McAuley before hammering in a shot which was deflected over the bar. Simon Davey had come close on a couple of occasions but on 37 minutes, he made no mistake with his latest effort.

Dean Barrick launched a free-kick towards the Hartlepool box where Andy Saville flicked it on to Kevin Kilbane. His first time effort came back off a defender's legs to Simon DAVEY who hit a right-foot volley past the stunned 'keeper.

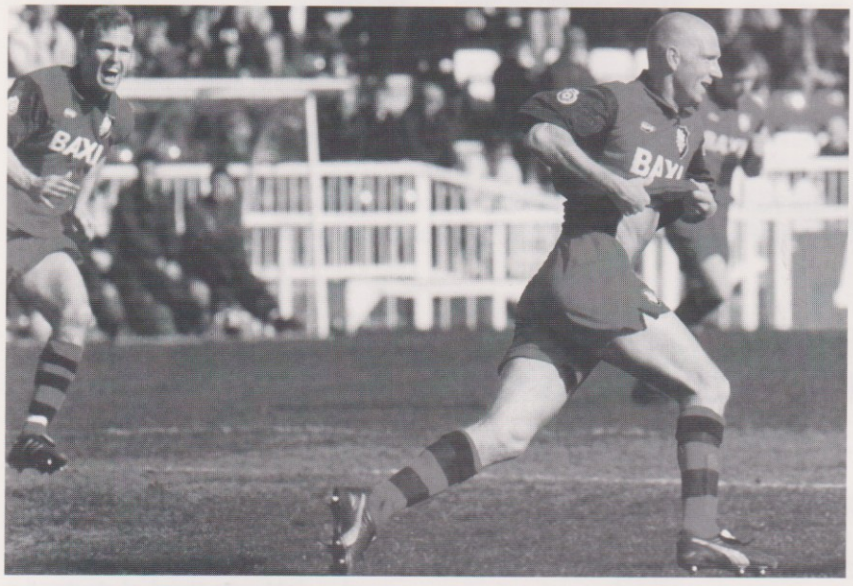
The home side came close to drawing level in the latter stages of the first-half but Lucas kept out long range efforts from both Howard and Tait.

Hartlepool were on top during the opening exchanges of the second-half but a mixture of desperate defending and poor finishing prevented them from scoring.

There were just eight minutes to play when Hartlepool failed to clear a corner, Ian McGuckin heading the ball into the path of Andy SAVILLE and he promptly smashed home his 29th goal of the season from the edge of the area. The goal produced a brief invasion of the Victoria Ground by jubilant North End supporters whilst the final whistle resulted in hundreds more taking to the field against club orders!

What the papers said:

Brian Ellis of the Lancashire Evening Post wrote: ' Champion defender David Moyes celebrated Preston's first League title for 25 years with a bottle of beer and declared "We've deserved this." The club's assistant-manager, who turned in a man-of-the-match performance in the win which clinched it at Hartlepool is in no doubt who the best side in the Third Division are: "the ones with the most points ....and that's us." Moyes has missed only five games all season and significantly North End have only won one in his absence. So it was fitting he should take the lead role in Saturday's 2-0 victory in the North East which guaranteed the club only its seventh Championship in more than a century.'



Saville begins to celebrate yet another goal in only the way he could.

Preston North End v Tottenham Hotspur

Tuesday 17th September 1996

Last gasp equaliser foils Premiership thoroughbreds

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Tottenham Hotspur 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Holt)
	Tottenham Hotspur : (Anderton)
Attendance	16,258
Referee	S. Lodge (Barnsley)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Mimms; Kay; Barrick; Rankine; Wilcox; Kidd; Davey; Bryson; Saville; Holt; Kilbane; subs; Atkinson; McDonald and Squires;
	Tottenham Hotspur: Walker; Edinburgh; Wilson; Howells; Calderwood; Campbell; Anderton; Neilsen; Armstrong; Allen; Fox; subs; Baardsen; Nethercott and Rosenthal;

Having reached the second round of the Coca Cola Cup and its six-figure pay-off with a goal in injury-time of extra-time against Wigan Athletic, North End landed a plum tie against Tottenham Hotspur.

England international Darren Anderton who was due for a long-awaited operation for a groin problem set the visitors on the road with a goal inside the opening two minutes. ANDERTON waltzed through the acres of space afforded to him by North End's defence before letting fly from fully 25 yards. His shot took a significant deflection off the head of Chris Armstrong before looping over the head of North End 'keeper Bobby Mimms.

Anderton continued to pose problems for North End's defenders but his team-mates failed to capitalise on the chances he created and so were unable to add what would have been an all-important second goal. The closest they came was in the 27th minute when Sol Campbell got free of his marker to head powerfully towards Mimms' top left-hand corner, but the former Spurs' 'keeper pulled off a tremendous save.

On the half-hour mark, former Blackburn youngster Michael Holt came close to levelling the scores when he nodded inches wide from a Bryson cross. After this, Preston began to raise their game and with Kevin Kilbane having the better of Clive Wilson, further chances came their way. New boy Mark Rankine who was having an outstanding game in the North End midfield, scraped Walker's crossbar with a powerful effort whilst Andy Saville outjumped Colin Calderwood and forced Walker to save at the foot of the post.

Early in the second-half, Michael Holt's snap shot almost surprised Ian Walker, who after seeing it late, was forced to turn it behind for a corner. After Simon Davey brought another fine save out of the Spurs' 'keeper, he had little to do for much of the second-half as the London club's defence kept North End at arms length.

With the game heading into time added on for stoppages, it looked as though Spurs had done enough to hold on to their lead. As the clock ticked round towards full-time, Ian Bryson whipped in a cross from the right-wing and though it reached Simon Davey on the edge of the six-yard box, he was unable to get a clean shot on goal. North End surged forward one last time and Dean Barrick swung over a deep cross where Bryson met it first time, crossing hard and low into the Spurs' six-yard box. Michael HOLT slid in to turn the ball past Ian Walker for a thoroughly deserved equaliser.

Had North End's final ball into the penalty area been better and the forwards' finish more controlled, then Spurs could have been facing a real uphill battle in the second leg, which North End eventually lost 3-0.

Preston North End v Blackpool

Friday 13th December 1996

Benno double leads North End to televised derby victory

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Blackpool 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Bennett 2; Reeves)
	Blackpool: (-)
Attendance	14,262
Referee	J. Kirkby (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Mimms; Gage; Barrick; Davey; Kidd; Gregan; Ashcroft; McDonald; Reeves; Atkinson (Bennett); Kilbane; subs; Squires and Bryson;
	Blackpool: Banks; Thorpe; Barlow; Bradshaw; Linighan (Cardon); Brightwell; Bonner; Mellon; Philpott; Ellis; Preece; subs; Darton and Onwere;

The game against Blackpool was never likely to be a classic for the Sky TV cameras because of the depth of rivalry between the two struggling clubs and of course the shared fear of losing for reasons of both points and pride.

Former North End favourite Tony Ellis was heckled throughout the game, the home fans' fury being enough to cause him to miss a number of goalscoring opportunities he would have buried during his time at Deepdale. The game was less than five minutes old when he was clean through on goal but instead of waiting for Bobby Mimms to commit himself, he took the chance early, allowing the North End 'keeper to palm the ball round the post.

David Reeves also had an early chance to open the scoring, but Atkinson's cross appeared to catch him by surprise, the ball cannoning off his outstretched foot for Banks to block with his leg. Kevin Kilbane went close for North End and Reeves had a shot charged down before shooting straight at the 'keeper. North End's last chance of the first-half fell to Sean Gregan, his powerful header being well saved by Steve Banks.

A minute after the interval, Tony Ellis fluffed his shot from only a couple of yards out after Andy Preece had headed on Mark Bonner's corner, allowing Dean Barrick to clear the danger.

Midway through the second-half, North End manager Gary Peters replaced Graeme Atkinson with Gary Bennett, who had given a hardworking display earlier in the week in an Autowindscreen Shield victory at Chesterfield. The former Tranmere Rovers' striker, whose only Deepdale goal had helped beat Blackpool in the Marsden Cup Final a couple of months previously, had been on the field just three minutes when he undid the Seasiders again.

Kevin Gage's cross came off the head of David Reeves and with Banks out of his goal having failed to reach the cross, BENNETT hooked the ball into an empty goal.

Four minutes later, North End extended their lead when Ashcroft's neat backheel allowed Simon Davey to cross to the far post where REEVES rose highest to nod past Banks.

Preece could have put the visitors back in the game on 76 minutes but with only Mimms to beat, he glanced his header wide of the post. Two minutes after that, a short Kilbane corner to Neil McDonald was chipped into the near post where Reeves headed it on for BENNETT to stoop low and nod home from close range. A minute from time, Preece missed another golden opportunity when he drilled his shot wide from just ten yards out.

While Gary Bennett's goals rightly earned him the accolades, North End's defence in which new boy Sean Gregan stood out, helped Preston's season finally take off.

Preston North End v Blackburn Rovers

Tuesday 30th September 1997

North End rescue pride

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Blackburn Rovers 0**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Barrick)
	Blackburn Rovers: (-)
Attendance	11,472
Referee	M. Riley (Leeds)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Moilanen; Parkinson; Kidd; Murdock; Jackson; Gregan; (Cartwright); Appleton; Ashcroft (Reeves); Macken (Holt); Rankine; Barrick;
	Blackburn Rovers: Flowers; Valery; T. Pedersen; Croft; Coleman; Johnson (Duff); Beattie; McKinlay; Anderson; Wilcox; P.Pedersen; subs Gill and Reed;

North End kept the same side that had managed a goalless draw at Wycombe, whilst Rovers rested eight players from the side which also fought out a goalless draw against Coventry City.

In the first leg a fortnight earlier, which Rovers won 6-0, they scored three late goals through Dahlin, Sutton and Gallacher and Danish striker Per Pedersen could have started where they left off. After just two minutes, he was put clear on the right of goal but pulled his shot well wide of Moilanen's far post.

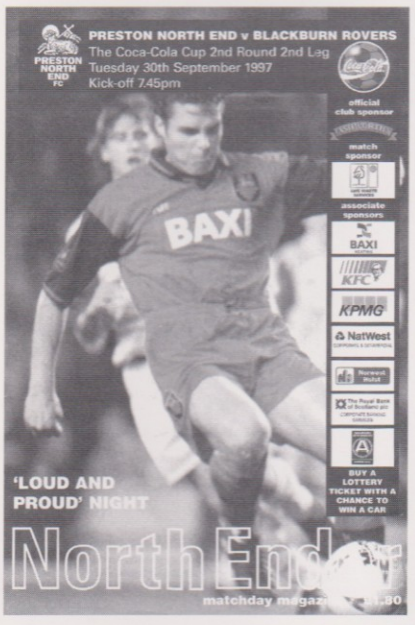
North End took the lead after 15 minutes when Barrick knocked a long diagonal ball up to Mark Rankine. He hit it wide for Michael Appleton whose cross into the area was missed by Lee Ashcroft but Dean BARRICK was on it in a flash to crash an unstoppable shot past the outstretched left hand of Tim Flowers.

Five minutes later, Jonathan Macken was stretchered off following an inocuous-looking challenge by Tore Pedersen. The North End striker was replaced by former Rovers player Michael Holt, who came on for his first appearance of the season. Initially he was unable to come to grips with Rovers' offside trap but still almost netted a second goal for North End. Ryan Kidd sent in a hard, low shot which Flowers fumbled at the foot of his right-hand post. Holt raced in for the rebound, his shot clipping the 'keeper's knee before flying up to hit the crossbar!

Towards the end of the first-half, Wilcox hit a log range shot narrowly off target whilst James Beattie brought a finger-tip save out of North End's Finnish 'keeper.

In the early stages of the second-half, Cartwright, Holt and Parkinson all went close to extending North End's lead whilst Per Pedersen hesitated with only Moilanen to beat, allowing the Finn to spread himself and save with his legs. Anderson had a golden opportunity to level things up on the night but Kidd's last-gasp tackle denied him.

North End held out for victory and in doing so, reclaimed a bit of pride.



Preston North End v Arsenal

Monday 4th January 1999

Nogan double shakes Cup holders

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Arsenal 4**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Nogan 2)
	Arsenal: (Boa Morte; Petit 2; Overmars)
Attendance	21,099
Referee	D. Gallagher (Banbury)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Lucas; Parkinson; Kidd; Murdock ; Jackson; Gregan (Appleton); Cartwright; Rankine; Nogan (Harris); Macken (McKenna); Eyres;
	Arsenal: Manninger; Dixon; Vivas; Vieira; Keown; Bould; Parlour; Mendez (Caballero); Petit; Boa Morte; Overmars (Garde);

Arsenal arrived at Deepdale without several top names, but the team Arsene Wenger put out still had an awesome look about it with Steve Bould and Martin Keown at the heart of defence, Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira in midfield and Ray Parlour and Marc Overmars outside them.

The Gunners were knocked out of their stride as North End had the better of the early exchanges and it was fully 15 minutes before the visitors threatened David Lucas' goal. The young keeper getting everything behind a rasping Ray Parlour shot. North End took the lead after 17 minutes when Kidd got free on the left. Eyres and Bould both slid for his hard, low cross at the near post but as the ball stopped dead, the North End winger managed to flick it into the path of Kurt NOGAN who slammed it home.

A minute later, Arsenal looked to have equalised but Parlour's well-struck shot hit Colin Murdock and flashed wide of a post. Manninger had already tipped an in-swinging David Eyres corner over his own bar but when an identical corner in the 21st minute was curled in, he completely missed it, allowing NOGAN to score his and North End's second goal of the game.

Two minutes later, David Lucas was at full stretch to turn another Ray Parlour drive round the post. In the 28th minute, Arsenal could consider themselves unfortunate in not being awarded a penalty after Murdock appeared to pull back Boa Morte. Ten minutes later the same two players were involved in a tussle in the box but again the referee waved away the visitors' claims for a spot-kick.

Just before half-time, Arsenal pulled a goal back when BOA MORTE's shot took a deflection off Gregan before looping into the far corner of Lucas' net.

Three minutes after the restart, Arsenal were lucky not to concede a third goal as Manninger's clearance cannoned off Nogan's foot and hit the side-netting. At the other end, Lucas brought the crowd to their feet with a magnificent one-handed save from an Overmars shot. It was end to end and Lee Cartwright's cross bounced on the top of Manninger's crossbar before being cleared.

On 58 minutes, Overmars had skipped past a lunging tackle from Michael Jackson when Eyres made a desperate sliding tackle to bring the Dutchman down. The North End winger was shown the red card and from the resulting free-kick, PETIT curled a left-foot shot round the Preston wall for the equaliser. The Gunners now began to knock the ball about with far more confidence on 78 minutes they took the lead when Boa Morte crossed into the six-yard box. Ryan Kidd was deliberately taken out by an elbow from Caballero, allowing PETIT the simple task of tapping home from close range.

Three minutes later OVERMARS netted Arsenal's fourth goal. The Gunners could have had another in the final minute but Caballero's downward header was turned on to a post by Lucas before being scrambled away.

Wrexham v Preston North End

Saturday 30th January 1999

Wrexham hit by a bunch of fives

Final Score	**Wrexham 0 Preston North End 5**
Venue	Racecourse Ground
Scorers	**Wrexham:** (-)
	PNE: (Jackson; Nogan; Macken; Eyres; Kidd)
Attendance	6,394
Referee	D. Gallagher (Banbury)
Line-ups	**Wrexham:** Cartwright; McGregor; Hardy; Brammer; Spink; Carey; Chalk (Gibson); Russell; Connolly; Griffiths (Rush); Whitley;
	PNE: Lucas; Darby; Harrison; Kidd; Jackson; Gregan (Ludden); Cartwright; Rankine; Nogan (McKenna); Macken (Harris); Eyres;

North End's biggest away win for 45 years sent a shuddering warning to the rest of the leading pack in the Second Division. Defeat for Wrexham was both emphatic and embarrassing, as many home fans left long before the end, vowing never to return.

Preston had gone to North Wales determined to banish the memory of a rare away defeat at Bournemouth but even David Moyes could not have imagined the response to his "make the fans proud of you" rallying call would be answered in such devastating fashion.

The writing was on the wall for the Welsh side after six minutes when David Eyres swung over a corner from the left and Michael JACKSON climbed in front of Wrexham 'keeper Mark Cartwright to head home. Three minutes later, Preston should have scored again. Kurt Nogan intercepted a poor back pass from Phil Hardy and flicked the ball round the advancing 'keeper but with the goal at his mercy, allowed McGregor to pinch it off him.

On 14 minutes, Eyres hit another corner to the near post where Martyn Chalk got the ball away but it came out to Rankine who slipped it back to Eyres. The winger curled over a pin-point cross to Lee Cartwright at the far post and he nodded it down for NOGAN to hook home inside the six-yard box.

Just before the half-hour mark, North End grabbed their third goal. Gregan headed on for Rankine and he in turn nodded it forward for MACKEN. The North End striker cracked a superb left-foot volley into the top corner for his first League goal in two months. Five minutes later, Macken had a shot deflected narrowly wide, then another in-swinging corner from Eyres looked to be floating straight in at the near post before Chalk headed it clear.

Both 'keepers were in action early in the second-half with Cartwright saving from Macken and Lucas palming Karl Connolly's powerfully struck effort round the post.

Wrexham's mini-revival then saw David Brammer blast a shot at Lucas and Carl Griffiths arrive a faction too late to pick up any pieces.

Lee Cartwright looked to have scored North End's fourth goal but his namesake flung himself full length to turn the ball behind for a corner. Though Wrexham brought on substitute Ian Rush after 63 minutes, it was North End who netted the game's next goal. Julian Darby's free-kick was met by David EYRES who leapt high to power home a header.

The referee waved away claims for a penalty after Mark Rankine had been upended by Dean Spink and then the ever-willing Eyres rattled the crossbar. Substitute Jason Harris hammered the ball low into the box and Eyres' shot came down off the bar for a second time, hitting the unsuspecting Wrexham 'keeper before being cleared. With just one minute remaining, Eyres sent over a perfect corner from the left and KIDD scored North End's fifth with a stooping header at the far post.

Preston North End v Gillingham

Sunday 15th May1999

All-square in play-offs after first leg

Final Score	**Preston North End 1 Gillingham 1**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Eyres)
	Gillingham: (Taylor)
Attendance	18,584
Referee	J. Kirkby (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Lucas; Alexander; Ludden; Murdock; Jackson; Gregan; Cartwright; Rankine; Nogan (Appleton); Macken (Harris); Eyres;
	Gillingham: Bartram; Southall; Carr; Smith; Butters; Pennock; Patterson (Hodge); Hessenthaler; Asaba (Saunders); Galloway (Brown); Taylor;

North End welcomed back top-scorer Kurt Nogan, wingers David Eyres and Lee Cartwright and left-back Dominic Ludden for the play-off semi-final, first-leg, against Gillingham - a match the club officials had billed as the most important of the season.

Skipper Sean Gregan was booked after just 18 seconds for a foul on Gillingham's assistant-manager Andy Hessenthaler and he was lucky not to receive his marching orders after five minutes after clobbering the same player in an aerial challenge.

The first-half as a whole was scrappy with goalscoring chances at either end, being few and far between. Lee Cartwright who was playing only his second game in three months, headed wide from a David Eyres' cross with only Bartram to beat. Eyres and Cartwright again were off target with headers though the Whites almost took the lead when Graham Alexander's corner caused panic in the Gillingham goalmouth. Mark Rankine tried to force the ball over the line, whilst Sean Gregan's powerful header was cleared to safety by Mick Galloway. David Lucas hadn't had much to do but he was called into action in the closing stages of the first-half, first diving at the feet of Carl Asaba and then inadvertently diverting the ball to safety off his forehead after Guy Butters' free-kick had been flicked on by Adrian Pennock.

Ten minutes into the second-half, North End took the lead. Graham Alexander's curling cross from the right was met by David EYRES, the winger sending a looping header over the outstretched arms of Vince Bartram.

With just quarter-of-an-hour to play, David Lucas pulled off the save of the match. Taylor crossed from the right and Southall at the far post, headed downwards, only to see the young North End 'keeper somehow turn the ball away.

In the 80th minute, disaster struck when Robert TAYLOR riding challenges from both Gregan and Jackson, got a lucky rebound off Michael Appleton before curling a right-foot shot towards the bottom corner. Lucas appeared to have the ball covered but it squirmed from his grasp and over the line. Two minutes later, the Gills almost took the lead but Carl Asaba's cheeky back-heel was just wide of the target. On 83 minutes, North End's appeals for a penalty, after Southall seemed to knock the ball away with his hand, were refused. Still pressing forward in search of a second goal, Dominic Ludden crashed a low shot across the face of the goal but there was no-one there to apply the finishing touch.

Though this was the third 1-1 draw between the two sides this season, it was clear at the final whistle that Gillingham felt they had got the winning draw. They were right, going on to win the second leg, and ultimately promotion.

Everton v Preston North End

Saturday 29th January 2000

North End lose at Goodison but it is they who look a top flight team

Final Score	**Everton 2 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Goodison Park
Scorers	**Everton:** (Unsworth; Moore)
	PNE: (-)
Attendance	37,486
Referee	M. Riley (Leeds)
Line-ups	**Everton:** Myhre; Weir; Ball; Unsworth; Dunne; Gough; Pembridge (Cadamarteri); Barmby; Campbell; Hutchison; Jeffers (Moore);
	PNE: Moilanen; Alexander; Edwards; Murdock; Jackson; Gregan; Appleton (Basham); Rankine; Gunnlaugsson; Macken; Eyres (Cartwright/McKenna)

Although North End started on edge in front of the biggest crowd most of the team had ever faced, it wasn't long before Everton were the ones looking jittery!

Michael Jackson came to North End's rescue early in the game when he cleared the ball from the six-yard area after Francis Jeffers had rounded Moilanen. After both sides had penalty appeals turned down, Appleton sent a powerful header inches over the Everton bar. North End should have taken the lead after 21 minutes when Richard Gough's dreadful back-header put Gunnlaugsson clear. Unfortunately he delayed his shot, allowing Davie Weir to get back and get a tackle in. The ball flew to Appleton who hit it back into the middle but Gunnlaugsson's first time effort flew narrowly wide.

Scoring chances were few and far between during the remainder of the first-half but within a couple of minutes of the restart, Francis Jeffers ought to have given the home side the lead. Nick Barmby's astute pass found Jeffers with only Moilanen to beat but from 12 yards, the teenage striker pulled his shot wide.

Ten minutes into the second-half, Jackson appeared to pull back Campbell in the box but the referee waved away Everton's appeals for a penalty. In the 67th minute, Rankine crossed for Macken but his header from 12 yards out was straight at Thomas Myhre. Everton went straight down to the other end where Rob Edwards was adjudged to have brought down Don Hutchison just outside the box. Despite a four-man wall, David UNSWORTH curled the ball into Moilanen's top left-hand corner for the game's opening goal.

North End replaced Appleton with the fit again Steve Basham but after the Blues brought on the lively Danny Cadamarteri for Pembridge it was the home side who took the initiative. Walter Smith also replaced Jeffers with the American Joe-Max Moore and it was he who made sure of victory with a controversial goal in injury-time.

Moore was yards offside when Barmby played the ball through and though it was Campbell who fastened on to the ball, he was obviously interfering with play as he got in the way of his team-mate! Moilanen parried Campbell's shot but MOORE threw himself to knock home the rebound from close range.

North End certainly didn't deserve to lose 2-0 and at the final whistle, the Everton fans gave the Whites a deserved standing ovation.

Preston North End v Millwall

Saturday 29th April 2000

Medal for Sir Tom as North End win Championship

Final Score	**Preston North End 3 Millwall 2**
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Eyres; Jackson; Angell)
	Millwall: (Ifill; Neill)
Attendance	19,407
Referee	G. Laws (Whitley Bay)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Moilanen; Alexander; Edwards (Murdock); Kidd; Jackson; McKenna; Appleton; Rankine; Angell; Gunnlaugsson (Macken); Eyres;
	Millwall: Warner; Lawrence; Ryan (Shaw); Cahill; Nethercott; Tuttle; Gilkes (Neill); Livermore; Moody; Harris; Ifill;

Confirmation of North End's Second Division Championship success came five days earlier despite a 2-0 defeat at Cambridge. Against Millwall after turning on the style in a first-half of flowing football, North End ensured the trophy didn't arrive at Deepdale on a losing note.

Within seconds of the kick-off, North End were awarded a free-kick on the edge of the visitors' box after David Tuttle was adjudged to have pushed Brett Angell. David EYRES curled the ball into the goalmouth and though Angell stuck his neck out, it missed him completely and bounced beyond Warner in the Millwall goal into the far corner. That dream start after just 31 seconds could have been to no avail if the referee had upheld Millwall's claims for a penalty in the fourth minute. Neil Harris was going through on goal when he was sandwiched between Rob Edwards and Ryan Kidd and though he crashed to the ground, the referee waved away the visitors' appeals.

Only eight minutes had been played when North End went 2-0 up. Eyres sent over a spinning cross which Warner, the former Liverpool 'keeper fumbled as he collided with his own defender Stuart Nethercott. As the ball ran free, Michael JACKSON was the quickest to react, smashing the ball into the roof of the net.

Two minutes later, Paul McKenna almost got his name on the scoresheet but his low shot was well saved by Warner. Midway through the first-half, the Millwall 'keeper was lucky not to be dismissed after bringing down Gunnlaugsson just outside the box after he had made a mess of a clearance. Minutes later, Warner produced an outstanding save, tipping Graham Alexander's powerful header over the bar.

Five minutes before the interval it was 3-0 as McKenna evading Robbie Ryan's desperate lunging tackle, crossed for Brett ANGELL to get between two defenders and stab the ball into the net from close range.

The second-half was only two minutes old when Millwall pulled a goal back. Neil Harris's cross from the left-wing was collected by Paul IFILL. He took the ball round Rob Edwards before hammering it past Moilanen. Seven minutes later, the visitors scored again. Harris pulled the all back and though Moody missed his kick, Lucas NEILL was behind him and fired home from 15 yards out.

Though North End had a couple of opportunities to extend their lead, it was Millwall who came closest to finding the net and completing a remarkable recovery. That they didn't was due to Tepi Moilanen, the Finnish 'keeper stopping powerful drives from both Harris and Moody.

North End hung on to celebrate with a win before lifting the Second Division trophy. In a touching ceremony, Sir Tom Finney also received a Championship medal.

Fulham v Preston North End

Tuesday 24th October 2000

North End beat previously undefeated leaders

Final Score	**Fulham 0 Preston North End 1**
Venue	Craven Cottage
Scorers	**Fulham:** (-)
	PNE: (Appleton)
Attendance	14,354
Referee	P. Danson (Leicester)
Line-ups	**Fulham:** Taylor; Finnan; Melville; Coleman; Brevett; Davis (Trollope); Goldbaek (J. Collins); Clark; Fernandes (Boa Morte); Hayles; Saha;
	PNE: Lucas; Alexander; Edwards; Murdock; Gregan; Appleton; McKenna; Rankine; Meijer; Macken (Robinson); Cartwright;

Prior to this shock result, no team had come close to beating Fulham, not even Wolves, who halted the Cottagers charge into the record books by holding them to a goalless draw at Molineux after 11 straight wins. Fulham were expected to see off the First Division newcomers. North End's approach was to stop the home side playing their football from the back, it also had an attacking element.

Indeed, North End could and should have taken the lead inside the first minute when Erik Meijer, on loan from Liverpool, put Mark Rankine through. Unfortunately for him, the busy midfielder lifted the ball past Fulham 'keeper Maik Taylor and beyond his right-hand post.

Fulham winger Fernandes set up a number of chances for his team-mates but the nearest they came to scoring in the opening period was through Barry Hayles, who lashed a shot across the face of goal with only Lucas to beat. Fernandes also went close on the half-hour mark wen he cut inside two North End defenders before shooting into the side-netting. Louis Saha also had a couple of chances towards the end of the first-half but after blasting over from the edge of the North End penalty area, he then headed straight at David Lucas. Fulham, despite their territorial advantage, rarely troubled the Preston 'keeper and with skipper Sean Gregan in commanding form, the first-half ended goalless.

North End had to defend desperately at the beginning of the second-half but as the game wore on, it looked a distinct possibility that they would take a point.

Then on 68 minutes, the visitors stunned the Fulham supporters. Rankine was again put through on goal by Meijer but as the midfielder shaped to shoot, the ball was taken off his toes by Sean Davis and out for a corner. Michael APPLETON's inswinging flag kick somehow found its way into the net past a fumbling Maik Taylor who appeared to be unsighted by a team-mate.

The Cottagers were shell shocked and pressed forward in search of an equaliser. North End's defending was again desperate with five bookings a testimony to that. One of those booked was Rob Edwards, who was lucky not to be dismissed following his injury-time clash with Louis Boa Morte. The former Arsenal striker lashed out with his arm and North End's Welsh left-back retaliated with a wild kick which sent the Fulham player sprawling.

On the final whistle, the North End players showed their delight in having achieved what no other First Division side had managed so far - to topple Jean Tigana's outstanding title favourites.

Preston North End v Birmingham City

Thursday 17th May 2001

A night to remember

Final Score	**Preston North End 2 Birmingham City 1 (Agg: 2-2)** North End won 4-2 on penalties, after extra time.
Venue	Deepdale
Scorers	**PNE:** (Healy; Rankine) **Birmingham City:** (Horsfield)
Attendance	16,928
Referee	P. Danson (Leicester)
Line-ups	**PNE:** Lucas; Alexander; Edwards; Murdock; Gregan; Kidd; Cartwright; Rankine; Macken (Cresswell); Healy; Anderson (McKenna); **Birmingham City:** Bennett; Atherton (Lazaridis); Grainger; Sonner; Purse; M. Johnson; McCarthy (Eaden); O'Connor (Hughes); Horsfield; Marcelo; Woodhouse;

A goal down from the first leg, they desperately needed to get back on terms inside the 90 minutes to take the tie to extra-time and even penalties!

Though David Moyes was forced to field a patched-up side, the white-shirted walking wounded took the game to Birmingham from the first to the last whistle.

Early in the game, David Healy missed a golden opportunity for North End when Macken set him up some 12 yards from goal. Watched by his Northern Ireland manager, the young striker fired straight at Ian Bennett. However, on 24 minutes, the North End striker made amends. Graham Alexander took a throw-in on the right of the Birmingham box. Full-back Martin Grainger tried to clear but the ball eluded him and fell for HEALY to open the scoring with a blistering volley that entered the net off the underside of the bar.

Birmingham too had their chances with David Lucas making a fine double save to keep out McCarthy and Marcelo. The Brazilian striker had another chance in stoppage time at the end of the first-half but again Lucas saved well.

The Blues sent on Stan Lazaridis in place of Atherton and his first run and cross five minutes into the second-half resulted in Danny Sonner's header crashing back off the North End bar. Just before the hour, Lazaridis again got free, this time his cross from the left found Geoff HORSFIELD who popped up unmarked to hammer it past Lucas. The visitors were now in the ascendancy and again Marcelo forced Lucas into making a smart stop on the line.

With just 11 minutes to play, North End were awarded a penalty when an in-swinging corner from Rob Edwards was handled at the near post by Danny Sonner. Up stepped the normally reliable Graham Alexander but he slammed the spot-kick against the bar and the chance was gone.

As the fourth official put away the electronic board to signal four minutes of added time, Marcelo went close again. Then Lazaridis veered round David Lucas but from a difficult angle, shot across the face of an empty goal. From that let off, Jonathan Macken set up Healy and though Bennett saved his shot, Mark RANKINE gobbled up the rebound to take the game into extra-time.

Though both sides had chances to clinch victory, it had come down to the dreadful penalties.

Birmingham manager Trevor Francis was besides himself at Paul Danson and the Safety Officer's insistence that the penalties had to be taken before the Bill Shankly Kop. It looked at one stage as if the Blues were going to down tools and retreat to the dressing room until Francis relented under protest.

Graham Alexander put North End ahead whilst Lucas blocked Marcelo's attempt. David Healy then sent Bennett the wrong way before Darren Purse smashed his spot-kick against the woodwork. Skipper Sean Gregan put North End 3-0 up before Stan Lazaridis pulled a goal back. Rob Edwards missed his chance to send the Whites to Cardiff . But Paul McKenna kept his cool to give North End victory and spark wild scenes similar to the ones seven years earlier when the Whites recovered from 2-0 down to beat Torquay.

Bolton Wanderers v Preston North End

Monday 28th May 2001

No fairytale ending

Final Score	**Bolton Wanderers 3 Preston North End 0**
Venue	Millennium Stadium, Cardiff
Scorers	**Bolton Wanderers:** (Farrelly; Ricketts; Gardner) **PNE:** (-)
Attendance	54,328
Referee	U. Rennie (Sheffield)
Line-ups	**Bolton Wanderers:** Clarke; Barness; Charlton; Hendry; Bergsson; Nolan; Farrelly; Frandsen (Elliott); Hansen (Ricketts); Holdsworth (Whitlow); Gardner; **PNE:** Lucas; Alexander; Edwards; Murdock; Gregan; Kidd; McKenna (Cresswell); Rankine; Macken; Healy; Cartwright (Anderson);

An incredible 2000-2001 season which saw North End exceed all expectations, boiled down to a head-to-head with local rivals Bolton Wanderers at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium. Having missed out in both the final and semi-final stages in the past two years, the Wanderers started the game as favourites.

With a Premiership pot of gold awaiting the winners, it wasn't too surprising that the game got off to a somewhat edgy start. Also the newly laid pitch didn't help to settle the players' nerves.

The first chance of the game fell to Jonathan Macken after five minutes. The North End striker was allowed a free header from just six yards out but seemed surprised that the ball was allowed to reach him and could only direct it straight at Bolton 'keeper Matt Clarke. Bolton drew first blood after 17 minutes when Simon Charlton pumped a free-kick into the North End area. Rob Edwards' clearance fell to Gareth FARRELLY and his right-footed shot took a slight deflection off Rankine before beating Lucas's despairing dive. The goal certainly seemed to inspire Bolton and Hansen slipped with only Lucas to beat. Holdsworth broke through on the right-hand side of the box but Lucas spread himself at the near post to keep out the Bolton striker's effort. Wanderers' skipper Gudni Bergsson saw a looping header land on the top of Lucas' net before the North End 'keeper produced a fine diving save to hold Ricardo Gardner's volley.

Early in the second-half, Mark Rankine beat the Bolton offside trap but failed to get any power behind his shot and Clarke saved easily.

At the other end, Lucas made fine saves from Nolan and Holdsworth, the latter after Farrelly's square ball had opened up the North End defence.

Rankine got another sight of the Bolton goal but snatched at his shot, sending the ball well wide of the target. With a little over twenty minutes to play, Macken did brilliantly to hold off two defenders before feeding Healy. The Northern Ireland international managed to get in a shot but it was too close to Clarke who turned it behind for a corner.

Bolton's Danish international midfielder Per Frandsen broke from deep before eventually releasing Holdsworth but North End cleared the danger before he could get in a shot. Preston continued to push forward in search of an equaliser and Macken after holding off Colin Hendry, laid the ball off to Healy whose shot was turned behind by Clarke. The Wanderers' 'keeper did well five minutes from time when he punched away Healy's cross with Macken waiting to pounce. A minute later, Bolton substitute Michael RICKETTS fastened on to Farrelly's through ball and rounded Lucas to make it 2-0 to Bolton. With the game in its final

minute, GARDNER broke from inside his own half, outpacing a dispirited North End defence before unleashing a left-foot shot past Lucas.

Though it was an unhappy ending to a great season, it was one to look back on with pride. Hopefully, North End can now build on the campaign and reach their ultimate goal - the Premiership.

What the papers said:

Tony Dewhurst in the Play-Off Final Special wrote: 'There was no royal climb up the 39 steps to the Royal Box for Preston North End to collect their Premiership ticket. Instead skipper Sean Gregan just needed a gentle hop on to a raised platform to lift his consolation silverware. But there's not a Preston fan on the planet who will forget the Millennium Stadium experience inside Wales' Theatre of Dreams. Because it was Deepdale's wonderful 32,000 fans that finally put the proud back into Preston after enduring the wilderness years for so long. Preston were on a one-way ticket to Division Three when David Moyes grabbed the tiller in January 1998 with thoughts of top flight football a mere fantasy. Mid-table respectability in his first four months, play-offs in his first full season, a championshp the year after that and yesterday, a place at the play-off table.'

Whatever the result, the trip to the Millennium Stadium was always going to be a big day out for the fans.

Here's to the next 100 games.

The last game in the book is of course the Play-Off Final and this game did show that we had progressed so much since that Arsenal game. Despite the disappointment, when you look back, you can see that we are going in the right direction and it was amazing just to get to the final. Even now, members of my family and supporters alike tell me what a great day it was.

Let's hope for a 100 more like it, some of them in the Premiership!

Mark Lawrenson

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PRESTON NORTH END FC

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by DEAN HAYES